

Nine Special Qualities of The Buddha & Other Essays

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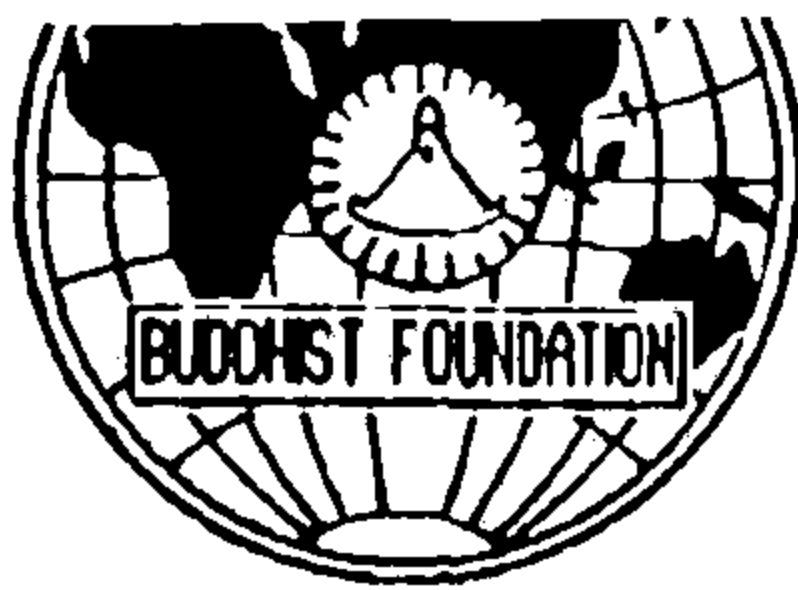
By

Ven. Aggamahapandita
Balangoda Anandamaitreya Mahanayake Thera

**NINE
SPECIAL QUALITIES
OF THE BUDDHA
AND
OTHER ESSAYS**

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March 1997**



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**NINE
SPECIAL QUALITIES
OF THE BUDDHA
AND OTHER ESSAYS**

A MEMORIAL VOLUME

in Honour of

Ven. Dr. Hammalawa Saddhatissa
Mahanayake Thero, M.A., Ph.D., Litt.
1995

By

Aggamahapandita
Balangoda Anandamaitreya
Mahanyake Thera

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume, entitled *Nine Special Qualities of the Buddha and other Essays* is published to commemorate the fifth death anniversary of the late **Ven. Dr. Hammalawa Saddhatissa Nayake thera**. The publication is undertaken by the world Buddhist Foundation and the Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre. Most of the essays in this volume by the Most Ven. Aggamahapandita Balangoda Anandamaitreya Mahanayake Thera, originated as discourses given at the Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre. The Mahanayake Thero was invited to observe the Vassana retreat for 1994 at the centre. In spite of the busy program in Sri Lanka, he accepted the invitation and spent the Vassana retreat at the Centre, for five months. At ninety nine years of age (the ninety ninth birthday was celebrated at the centre with a Partitta chanting ceremony) and it was a pleasant example to see him vigorously working at his writings in Buddhism, meditation, giving discourses, answering questions and explaining points to scholars who flocked from all over the United Kingdom to him. Most of his lectures were recorded and preserved. It is from some of these tapes that these essays were compiled. The Mahanayake thero gave his consent for the publication. He himself edited a major number of the essays before he left for Sri Lanka.

It is my pleasant task to acknowledge the meritorious activity undertaken by many friends of the Sri Saddhatissa Centre to make this venture a success. Among them the following friends need special mention. Mr Sudanta and Dr (Mrs) Dilsiri Abeykoon, Dr S.A. Siriwardena, Dr & Mrs R.M.M. Rajapaksha, Dr. & Mrs Knightly Seneviratna, Dr & Mrs Herbert Wimalasundara and Dr & Mrs L.U. Abeyesiri for contributions towards the cost of printing. Prof. Lance Cousins of Manchester University contributed an excellent introduction after reading this script. Ven. B. Ananda Mangala and Dr. Mrs. Subadra Siriwardena for the tedious task of preparation of the script. Mr. Ranjith and Lata Dassanayake for the splendid work of printing at short notice and bearing part of the cost and the Dayake Sabha and all friends of the Sri Saddhatissa Centre who helped during the Mahanayake Thero's stay at the Centre. These are only a few among many who helped in various ways to produce this

volume. To all I am thankful and may the merit gathered thus help them in their spiritual development and in their quest for Nibbana.

I wish to make special mention of Dr. Upali Abeyesiri and his wife Mrs. Pushpa Abesiri for their time - consuming and laborious efforts to make this volume a success.

Finally this volume contains several instances where the Mahanayake Thera with Metta has shown the efforts made by some individuals in recent publications to criticize Buddhism without in-depth knowledge in Buddhism.

Galayaye Piyadassi
Managing Director
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4 February 1995



ALLEN
JULY 1980

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INTRODUCTION

When I think of the work and achievements of the Ven. Ānanda Maitreya, I recall especially the teachings of one of the great *arahat* disciples of the Buddha: Mahācunda. According to Buddhaghosa, Mahācunda was the younger brother of Sāriputta, but he was in any case important in his own right; for he is several times included in a list of ten renowned and famous elder monks accompanying the Buddha. The Pali Canon includes several discourses attributed to Mahācunda. In one such *sutta* in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*¹ (given to the Ceti people) he sets out a warning against making claims as to either learning or meditation practice. Whatever one may claim, if greed, hate, delusion, anger, malice, and the like overcome him and remain in his mind, then the claim is false; for "the venerable one does not understand in the kind of way that, when one so understands, there is no greed; for greed overcomes him in this way and remains his mind." The same statement is applied to nine more kinds of mental defilement, ending with wrong wishes; so the discourse is included in the Great Section (*Mahāvagga*) of the *Book of the Tens*. Such claims are then compared to a poor man making claims to wealth - he would not be able to deliver when something arose which required wealth or money or goods.

In itself of course this is simply an expansion of a very fundamental part of Buddhist teaching. Right view gives rise to right thought. Wrong view gives rise to wrong thought. At times when one's mind is not free from sensuality or lacks loving-kindness and compassion, then one should not suppose that one has right view. This is of course important, but it is not so much this implication of Mahācunda's teachings that came to mind. In fact Mahācunda distinguished three cases:

1. The person who lays claim to knowledge: "I know this *dhamma*.
I see this *dhamma*"
2. The person who lays claim to self-development (*bhāvanā*): "I have developed my body, developed morality (*sīla*), developed my mind, developed understanding."

1. AN V 41-45

3. The person who makes both these claims.

According to Buddhaghosa all three of these are simply false claims to arahatship. No doubt this is so, but what is of special interest is the way in which Mahācunda contrasts the two possibilities of developing knowledge and practising meditation. This is clearly something with which he was concerned; for in another discourse², also given to the Cetis (who dwelt in modern Uttar Pradesh), he makes a very similar distinction.

The contrast here is between bhikkhus who are devoted to *dhamma* and those who meditate (*jhāyin*). The tendency in discussion of this well-known passage has been to interpret 'bhikkhus who are devoted to *dhamma*' as preachers of doctrine, following Buddhaghosa who says this is a name for *dhamma* preachers (*dhammakathika*). However, as we shall see, this is rather too limited an interpretation of *dhamma* which here, as often elsewhere, means more than simply 'book knowledge'. Taking the opposition for the moment as simply between scholars and meditators, Mahācunda explains the way in which these two groups sometimes criticize each other.

The scholars sometimes denigrate the meditators: "But these people constantly think and imagine that they are meditators. What pray do they think of? Why do they think? How pray do they think?" In fact the passage is difficult to render into English because, as already indicated by Buddhaghosa, it plays on the meanings of the verb *jhāyati* which both means 'to meditate' in the sense of practising *jhāna* and 'to think' in more general senses of the word, including obsessive or imaginative thinking. Indeed forms related to this verb occur a number of times in the translated passage - I have underlined them above. The point is clear enough. These so-called thinkers don't really think!

In the next paragraph the meditating Bhikkus denigrate the scholars. "But these people who keep saying that they are devoted to *dhamma* are excited, elated, unsteady in mind, garrulous, loose in speech, of muddled mindfulness, lacking clear comprehension, unconcentrated, with wandering minds and uncontrolled senses. What pray is the *dhamma* they are devoted to? Why are they devoted to *dhamma*? How pray are they devoted to *dhamma*?" Here the intended contrast is between *dhamma* as something to study (*pariyatti*) and *dhamma* as something to practise (*paṭipatti*). The list of qualities is very close

2.AN III355-56.

to a reversal of the usual lists of qualities required to successfully practise meditation. Again the point is clear. How can these people be devoted to *dhamma* if they don't practise it?

Mahācunda goes on to describe the tendency of the scholars to praise only scholars and for the meditators to praise only meditators. He points out that all this undermines confidence both for scholars and for meditators and in behaving so, neither party has practised "for the happiness of the manyfolk, for the profit of people in general, for the good and happiness of *devas* and human beings". Mahācunda concludes by exhorting both kinds of bhikkhu to train themselves to give praise to the other kind. He supports this by pointing out the special qualities of each. Meditators would be praised because: "Wondrous, sirs, are those persons and hard to meet in the world who dwell touching the deathless element." Those devoted to *dhamma* would be praised because: "Wondrous, sirs, are those persons and hard to meet in the world who by means of understanding pierce profoundly meaningful terms and see."

The two possibilities are both interesting. In the first case Mahācunda is referring to those advanced practitioners of *samathavipassanā* meditation who master the most advanced attainments so as to achieve the attainment of cessation i.e. the fullest possible experience of *nibbāna* in life. the second case uses the rather unusual expression 'atthapada' and is interpreted by Buddhaghosa as "the secret, concealed meaning of the aggregates, elements, bases, etc."³ Initially he explains piercing and seeing through understanding as the understanding of the path together with insight. So the second case is taken as referring to the kind of understanding (*paññā*) associated with enlightenment as well as to the kind of insight which is close to that. This must be correct in the light of the other passages where 'atthapada' is used. In other words Mahācunda is implying that 'those devoted to *dhamma*' achieve some profound level of realization.

Buddhaghosa does then add a sentence which is perhaps his own addition to the commentary handed down: "But in regard to this matter both the understanding of comprehension (*sammasana*) and penetration and the understanding of learning and questioning are appropriate too." This extends the meaning to the earlier stages of insight and even to the prior establishing of a basic knowledge of the five aggregates and so on which is "the soil in which

3. Mp III 379; cf. IV 168

understanding grows"⁴. While in a general sense this is no doubt necessary in order to become 'devoted to *dhamma*', I suspect it is not quite Mahācunda's intention here.

Turning to the other passages in which *atthapada* is used, it occurs only in two other passages in the first four *nikāyas* ⁵. The first of these is a *sutta* in which the Buddha points out that someone's morality can only be known by living with them, their gentleness can only be known by talking with them, their staying power can only be known in times of trouble and their understanding can only be known through discussion - in each case only after a long time not a short period, by someone who pays attention not someone who does not and by someone with understanding not by someone with poor understanding. In the discussion of the fourth case it is pointed out that a person without understanding "does not utter a profoundly meaningful expression, which is peaceful, subtle, beyond the reach of reasoning (*takka*), astute, to be known by the wise."

In fact these five adjectives (beginning with 'peaceful') which are used to qualify *atthapada* occur together in a passage which is found a number of times in the *nikāyas*, qualifying 'profound *dhamma* that is hard to see, hard to awaken to'⁶. In general they do not refer to doctrine or teaching in any superficial sense. The Buddha for example uses this expression several times in regard to his famous hesitation to preach: he refers to it as the *dhamma* which he has attained and we may suppose that it is the precise experience of enlightenment that is meant. Similarly in the *Brahmajālasutta* this expression (in the plural) is used just as the Buddha turns from the *mahāsīla* practised by his bhikkhu disciples to the practice of meditation, ect. In fact he refers to the *dhammas* which he had 'known for himself by higher knowledge and realised'. In the *Caṅkhisutta* the Buddha explicitly declares that this profound *dhamma* cannot easily be taught by someone whose mind is attached or possesses anger or delusion. Again then it is not simply a matter of verbal knowledge.

The other passage in the four *nikāyas* which refers to *atthapada* is found in the *Awakening Section* of the *Book of the Nines* in the *Anguttara-nikāya*. Here the Buddha praises the *dhamma* discourse of a bhikkhu called Nandaka and comments that when those gone forth are seated together, one of two things

4. Vism 443

5. AN II 189-90; IV 362; Dh 100; J V 104; VI 318.

6. Vin I 4; DN I 12; II 36-7; M I 167; 487; SI 136; cf. Nidd II 185; It 37

is appropriate; either discourse connected with *dhamma* or the noble silence. After describing four qualities that monks should possess, the Buddha retires and Nandaka outlines the five advantages in "from time to time hearing *dhamma*, from time to time discussing *dhamma*".⁷ The third advantage is that, just when a bhikkhu is teaching *dhamma* to his fellows, by means of understanding he pierces profoundly meaningful terms and sees in regard to the *dhamma*. Since the second advantage is that he understands the letter and the meaning, what is meant here must be something more than that.

The expression *atthapada* is also found in the Pali recension of the *Dhammapada* in a set of three verses concerned with its opposite: *anatthapada*. I quote them from Ven. Ānanda Maitreya's translation of the *Dhammapada*.⁸

1. A single word full of sense
which brings peace of mind to the hearer,
is far worthier than a thousand utterances
full of senseless words. (100)
2. A single word full of meaning
which brings peace to the mind of the hearer,
is far worthier than a thousand verses
full of senseless words. (101)
3. one may utter a hundred verses
full of vain descriptions.
But a single verse
that brings peace of mind to the hearer,
is far worthier than all that. (102)

The peace that is meant here is certainly the bliss of *nibbāna* because the verb *upasammati* ('becomes peaceful') corresponds to *upasama* ('inner peace') which is usually used in that sort of context. In fact the stories of the *Dhammapada commentary* show that these verses were later understood in this way. All of the stories connected with these verses concern cases of arousing insight and

7. This is the *Kālena dhammasavanam* and *Kālena dhammasākacchā* included in the blessings outlined in the *Maṅgalasutta*.

8. *Dhammapaka (Law Verses)*, freely rendered into English, Metro Printers, Colombo, 1978

subsequent attainment as a result of hearing just a few words of teaching. This is perhaps not surprising, since in Pali the word *attha*, especially in compounds, tends to have both the sense of 'meaningful' and the sense of 'connected with the goal'. It is then easy to understand *atthapada* as a word which brings one to the goal.

To summarize what Mahācunda is saying: scholars and meditators should not criticize one another, but rather each should actively praise the other. They should do so because each form of the life of the Buddhist bhikkhu has the potential of achieving rare lofty levels in the realization of the Buddha's teaching.

A number of studies have suggested that the fact that Mahacunda puts forward these teachings indicates that there was already some kind of division or even conflict in the Sangha between scholars and meditators. This is obviously possible, but it is far from proven and does not at the present time really amount to more than speculation. Alternative possibilities might be that there was some particular tendency or preference among the Cetis or that Mahācunda is simply trying to present an ideal balance of the kind so common in Buddhist teachings. Other suggestions could certainly be advanced.

The issue of the relationship between scholars and meditators arises again in a slightly different form in Ceylon in the early first century B.C. At this time a serious famine had depleted the population and there was some fear for the preservation of the teaching. Indeed it was at this point, we are told, that the Pali Canon was first set in writing, precisely for this reason. The dispute was between the preachers (*dhammakathikas*) and the forest practitioners of the purificatory exercises known as the *dhutangas*, specifically referred to as the rag-robe wearers (*paṃsukūlikas*). The issue was as to whether theory (*pariyatti*) or practice (*paṭipatti*) was the root of the *sāsaṇa*. The upshot of the debate, as recorded for us in texts written by scholars rather than forest practitioners, is that it is concluded that theory is the foundation.⁹

There is a great danger that such a debate is presented as a victory of textual studies over the actual practice of Buddhism. This is quite wrong. Those who advocated the view that theory was the foundation of the *sāsaṇa* did so

9. Surprisingly, only one commentary of Buddhaghosa in fact records the story: Mp I 92 f.

because they believed that the preservation of the texts was the way to assure the continuation of practice and realization of *dhamma* for the future. Unfortunately, E.W. Adikaram ¹⁰, followed by Ven Walpola Rāhula ¹¹, has interpreted this story as indicating a rejection or devaluing of practice. I think this is the same mistake that is often made with regard to precepts or *dāna*. To say that these are fundamental or a necessary basis is not to deny the importance of meditation practice (*bhāvanā*). Of course saying that such things are important can sometimes be a kind of excuse on the part of a particular individual for not doing something they half feel they ought to be doing!

What is involved in the decision that theory is fundamental is a particular understanding of the relationship between the two. This is actually emphasized quite strongly, when the simile is given of a hundred or a thousand cattle who cannot continue their lineage if there is no cow capable of providing milk - similarly even if there are a hundred or a thousand bhikkhus who have aroused insight, if the theory of the Buddha's teaching is not available, there can be no penetration of the noble path.¹² In other words the teaching of the Buddha are important for the actual achievement of enlightenment. At the same time as theory being seen as basic, practice is seen as variable - surely a historically correct observation! So we read that the presence or absence of practice and penetration is something which varies from time to time. The *vibhaṅga commentary* even refers in this context to a time when there was no bhikkhu in the island Ceylon who had not achieved some degree of enlightenment i.e. stream-enterer or more.¹³ So theory is crucial, but nevertheless the commentator explicitly declares that the learned bhikkhu will go on to fulfill practice too.

Clearly the fact the dispute is between preachers and forest practitioners indicates that there was already a distinction between two life styles for bhikkhus. This is usually expressed today as the difference between the two alternative duties of study (*ganthadhura*) and meditation (*vipassanādhura*). In fact the distinction in this form does not appear to occur until slightly after the time of

10. Adikaram, E.W., *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, M.D.Gunasena/Puswella, Colombo/Migoda, 1953 [1946], p. 77 f.

11. Rahula, Reverend Walpola, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, 2nd. ed., M.D. Gunasena, Colombo, 1966, p.158.

12. Mp I 93.

13. Vibh-a 431 f.

Buddhaghosa. In the earlier commentaries the distinction is between study and (forest-) dwelling (*vāśadhura*).¹⁴ The word *dhura* means literally a 'yoke', but at the end of a compound it means 'having anything as the chief (foremost) part or ingredient' (MW). So the two alternatives were:

**ganthadhura* - a life in which books are the foremost ingredient;

**vāśadhura* - life in which forest-dwelling is the foremost ingredient i.e. practising such purificatory practices as eating only from the almsbowl, ect. (In one passage the *Suttanipāṭa* commentary uses *pariyattidhura* 'with theory foremost' in place of *ganthadhura*).

The later change to *vipassanādhura* is probably significant. It seems to imply that meditation was not conceived as part of the life of study and this may perhaps be a later development. Of course it is in fact highly likely that this would be something which would vary both from time to time and from monastery to monastery. As late as the mediaeval period the *Dambadeni Katikāvataa* recommends that town-dwelling (*gāmaṇāsīn*) monks should practise meditation as well as studying and carrying out their other duties¹⁵. We may suspect that this view was probably always present in traditional Theravada Buddhism, alongside the view that meditation was something to practise when you are older.

Ven. Ānanda Maitreya has not however been the kind of individual who neglects the parts of the Buddha's teaching with which he is uncomfortable. Renowned as one of the most famous scholar monks of the twentieth century, his studies have extended well beyond the limits of traditional Theravāda Buddhism. He has set an example in that regard that monks of younger generations will not find easy to match. Yet he also has an interest in and an appreciation of meditation practice, to a degree which is perhaps less usual among scholar monks today. No doubt the Elder Mahācunda would have greatly appreciated this combination of knowledge and self-development in a monk who certainly praises both devotion to *dhamma* and meditation.

That combination is certainly evinced in this collection Ven. Ānanda Maitreya's talks. They cover a range of *dhamma* topics and show very clearly

14. Sp III 561; Mp I 37; V 69; Mp I 37; Pj II 194 f.; 306; cp. also Sp I 238 f.; VI 1260 f.

15. Ilangasinha, H.B.M. *Buddhism in Medieval Sri Lanka*, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica 77, ed. Sunil Gupta, Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, 1992, p.62.

the breadth of the Mahānāyakathera's knowledge of traditional Buddhist theory. Those who have heard this near-centenarian monk who is a living reminder of a past generation of Buddhist scholarship will miss a certain quality of life and joy present in the spoken context, but will still appreciate some little gems of teaching, now made available in written form. For myself, I particularly value the excellent account of *nibbāna* which concludes this collection.

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January 14, 1995.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS

THE BUDDHA

Buddhism is the doctrine expounded by the Buddha. It is not a dogma, nor a revelation made known by any supernatural agency. The Buddha, the expounder of this doctrine, was neither a god, a son of a god, an incarnation of a god or a prophet sent by a god. He was a human being, a prince of the Sakyan clan of the Northernmost part of ancient India, the son of a king called Suddodhana, who ruled the kingdom of the Sakyans situated at the foot of the Himalayan range. The name given him by his parents was Siddharatha Gautama. Though he was not a supernatural being, he was a prodigy, an extraordinary and a rarest type of person. He was brought up as any other child of a royal family and lived amidst the greatest luxuries, as his family was extremely rich and powerful.

But even from the days of his boyhood he was contemplative, mostly inquisitive, astute and shrewd. He saw how human and animal beings suffered from the trials and tribulations of the world. He was moved by what he observed and grew up with compassion and pity for suffering mortals. At last when he was twenty nine years old he left his claim to the throne, all possessions and family, in search of a teacher who could show him the way to freedom from all suffering.

HIS DISCOVERY

He followed the instructions given him by the teachers who claimed to have found the way to perfect release, but was not satisfied with the results. At last, rejecting all those ways, after much struggle and experience, he discovered by himself the way, by which he attained to Full Enlightenment (Buddhahood). Thenceforth, he was recognised by his followers as "The Buddha, the Enlightened One". He discovered the nature of existence in the world, to be a ceaseless flow of unsatisfactory states or suffering, how and why it continues to be so, the nature of the state when

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it is ended and the way to end the suffering. He named these four facts the Four Great Truths.

After he attained to enlightenment, he spent teaching the world his discovery for forty five years, sharing his wisdom with others so that they could also tread the same path and free themselves from all suffering. After this incessant service he passed away to perfect peace of eternal bliss, Nibbana, the Sumnum Bonum.

FREEDOM IN BUDDHISM

The Buddha's method of teaching was absolutely unique and cannot be found in the teachings of any other world teacher of ancient days. The Buddha encouraged people to think for themselves, to reason out and test for themselves, and not to be bound by any blind belief. No dogmas found footing in his teachings. The religion of Vedic sacrifice dominated by its leaders the Brahmins was the predominant cult followed by the majority of people in India at the time, with its strict caste system. Any infraction of the rules would result in drastic penalties. The recitation, listening to Vedas and witnessing of Vedic ceremonies by a person of a lower caste resulted in cutting off the tongue, destruction of ears and being blinded. All the people of the other classes were expected to pay respect, take advice and supply the needs of the Brahmins with no question whatsoever. Such was the influence the Brahmins held over the greater part of India at the time of the appearance of the Buddha. In addition to the caste distinction, women had no freedom whatever and were treated almost as the slaves of their husbands. The Buddha came forward and criticized this system and emphasized the importance of free thought and encouraged the people to think and reason for themselves.

Once when he was touring the countries of India, as he used to do every year, the Buddha took lodgings in a rest-house reserved for royal families, as monks, recluses and ascetics were also allowed to use these dwellings. A leader of another religious movement also took lodgings in another part of the dwelling the same night. In the evening some disciples of the Buddha overheard a heated argument between the chief disciple of

and other Essays

this religious cult and the leader, in which the disciple was praising while the leader was criticizing the Buddha and his teachings. When they informed the Buddha of this argument, the following morning, he advised the disciples, saying, "Brethren, when you hear others speak ill of me, my teachings and followers, do not let it hurt your mind and do not be angry. If you are hurt in the mind or angry how could you judge whether they were right or wrong in their criticism? Be unmoved and impartial and think about what they say. When you see they were not correct, and if you feel it is necessary, tell them where they were wrong, but do not be hurt. If your mind is affected on that account, it will be a hindrance to your self-development. Suppose others praise me, my teachings or followers, do not be proud on that account either. If you be proud, how could you judge whether they were right or wrong in their praise? If you see they were right approve of it but do not be proud. If you were proud on that account, it would also be an obstacle to your own mental development."

BLIND FAITH

On another occasion he said, "Brethren, when I speak to you, do not accept it blindly, because you love and respect me. Examine it and put it to the test, as a goldsmith examines gold by cutting, heating and hammering it to know whether it is genuine gold or counterfeit. If you see it is reasonable, only then accept and follow it." This is the Buddha's way. This is how the Buddha encouraged everyone to think things through for himself.

In some religions you are warned and asked to believe what they teach, lest their god would consign you to hell. There is no such punishment or a curse imposed by the Buddha on others who would not believe him.

As regards the ritual of worship, it has no place in the Buddha's teachings. You might ask why Buddhists place flowers etc. before the Buddha image. What Buddhists do in that way is just showing their gratitude to the greatest teacher for his lifelong, unselfish service done for

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humanity by teaching and guiding the world along the right path. It is not a ritual at all.

Whether you pay homage to the Buddha or not, it is not as important as living a wholesome life, following the path shown by him. One of the Buddha's disciples who was deeply devoted to him adored him so much he found it difficult to take his eyes away from him. Buddha knew of this adoration and advised him, "What is the use of looking at this body, a mass of flesh and bone etc., go from here and look at the Dhamma (i.e. practise virtues, follow the path)."

Whether you pay such homage or not, it is not so important as living a wholesome life, pure in deed, word and thought. If you try to be pure in your life this way, you are a real follower of the Buddha.

ADVICE TO THE KALAMAS

One day, the Buddha visited the town let Kesaputta where the Kalama clan lived. A Kalama prince told him, "Ven. Sir, teachers of various beliefs visit us from time to time and expound different teachings. What one says is contradicted by another very often. Since this is happening over and over again we are confused and do not know which one is correct and which one is wrong."

Thereupon the Buddha said, "It is no wonder that one gets puzzled when one hears teachings contradictory to each other. But I tell you this, Do not accept any thing merely because it is handed down by tradition. Do not accept anything merely because many people repeat it. Do not accept any thing merely on the authority of the sage who teaches it. Do not accept anything merely because it is found in the so-called holy scriptures. Do not accept anything merely because probability is in it's favour. Do not accept anything merely because you have imagined it or it is inspired (by some supernormal agency). After examination, after testing it yourself, if you find it reasonable and is in conformity with your well being and the well being of others as well, then accept it and follow it."

RESPECT FOR OTHER TEACHERS

From the Buddhist point of view, one should never ridicule a great teacher because he was not a Buddhist in name. There were great teachers like Zoroaster, Confucius, Laotzu, Jesus and many others. A Buddhist should not disparage them. If one disparages any one of them, he does it from disdain, which is against the Buddha's teachings. Thus freedom of investigation and religious tolerance are encouraged in Buddha's teachings.

This broad minded approach is clearly seen in the account of an encounter with a believer of Jainism called Upali. Upali visited the Buddha with the view to dispute some points of the Buddha's teachings. But at the end of the discussion he was convinced and declared that he wanted to be a follower of Buddha and to stop all connections with the Jain monks. The Buddha advised, "Consider further, do not be in a hurry to follow me. Do not stop supporting the Jain monks whom you have treated respectfully for so long."

In another discussion with a wandering recluse concerning the differences between each other's doctrines, the Buddha said, "Well, my friend though we discuss our views and practices, do not think that I am trying to convert you to my side. I do not want to do so. You may go on your way, but let us see whether we both practise what we teach."

Thus there is full freedom of thought and speech in the teachings of the Buddha. You can be critical of the Buddha or his teachings. At the same time you should not get angry when others do the same thing with which you do not agree, since this freedom is extended to all people. Listen to them and judge impartially whether they are right or wrong. This is the Buddha's way.

DISEASE AND CURE

Most of the great teachers taught their followers to worship a god and tried to explain how the world was originated and so forth. The Buddha on the other hand, taught that to find answers to the problem of

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the origin of the world and the like, was not at all helpful in finding the answer to the question of suffering or unsatisfactory nature of universal existence. When a patient goes to a physician suffering from a serious illness, the physician has to diagnose the illness, find its cause, decide whether it is curable or not and prescribe a suitable treatment. Even though the patient might be interested in Astronomy or Geology it is not the physician's duty to try to discuss these and neglect or delay the treatment knowing how serious the illness is.

The Buddha was just like the physician in this illustration. He served the world as the physician for the maladies of the mind, as beings suffer due to these. Greed, anger, pride, selfishness, miserliness, jealousy and many defilements in various degrees, with ignorance as the root cause for these are the reason for suffering in the world. All beings (human and non-human) have become slaves of these maladies of the mind due to which they commit all types of wrong or negative deeds, speech and thoughts, resulting in pain both to themselves and to others. The Buddha directed all his efforts towards the cure of all these sufferings.

THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

The knowledge about the beginning and the end of the Universe is not helpful for the cure of our suffering. What is essential is to realise the nature of the mental maladies which causes all sorts of suffering both mental and physical; their cause, their cure and the way to attain to this cure. The Buddha guides us to realise these four facts. There are specific steps that must be taken to achieve this realisation.

The first step is to build good character within you. You have to refrain from wrong deeds, speech and wrong ways of earning your living. This is the foundation you have to lay, on which you have to erect the building of mental development, which is twofold. These are development of calmness of mind and development of insight. To develop a calm mind it is essential to develop concentration of mind, for which there are forty methods given in the Buddhist scriptures, out of which one is to be chosen suitable to your temperament.

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The last step is to examine your physical body with your mind, and investigate to see whether there is anything permanent or unchanging within your body. As a result of this investigation you will see that the body is a collection of ever-changing material states and that there is nothing permanent in them. There is instability in them as they are always arising and vanishing and thus there is no ego-entity to be found herein.

As well as realising the exact nature of your body in this way, you have to examine your mind. As you progress analysing and scrutinizing your mind, you will find that what you call your mind is just a stream of rising and vanishing mental states in which there is no substance and that every mental state is subject to change. They are arising and vanishing more rapidly than the material states of your body, and there is no ego-entity. When you come to understand your body and mind, your ignorance as to their nature disappears before the wisdom that dawns at the full realisation of your own true nature. When you look at the external things from the same perspective, you will see that the whole world is of the same nature as your own body and mind. You will see clearly that there is nothing to be attached to, nothing to be angry with and nothing to be taken as an ego-entity. When you achieve this understanding of life in the world, you will also see the opposite side - the unconditioned, unchanging, eternal state of perfect calmness and serenity free from all suffering.

To achieve this goal it requires no worship, no ritual, no belief in any dogma. The only thing you have to do is to know yourself perfectly.

In brief, the Buddha's way is the way to self-understanding, the way to self-purification, the way to free oneself from slavishness to the deceptive world of senses.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE NINE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE BUDDHA

Buddhists whenever they visit a temple take flowers, incense and candles or oil to light lamps, as offerings to be made to a statue of the Buddha. They also practise the offering of food and drinks to the statue of the Buddha. This practice is called 'Buddha Pooja'. To the uninformed this practice may look like idol worship. But it is not so.

The statue of the Buddha is a symbol and memorial of his perfect serene personality and his Dharmakaya, the spiritual body free of mental defilements, full of special qualities like Metta or loving kindness, Karuna or infinite compassion and so on. Artists have tried to combine all these perfection in the statue. The Buddha is the greatest teacher ever to have appeared in and world that attained perfect Enlightenment. Having attained his main aim there was no need for him to spend energy but to enjoy the supreme bliss of Nibbana for the rest of his life. But out of unlimited compassion for all living beings who are subject to never ending suffering in the circle of birth and death, he decided to teach the path of liberation. From the age of thirty five till his passing away to perfect Nibbana at the age of eighty - for forty five years, he went from village to village, town to town, city to city and country to country teaching the righteous path, without distinction to all beings. He had no need for gain or fame as he was above these worldly qualities. His only motive was the unselfish wish to teach the path of liberation to as many beings as possible during this long period of forty five years. This teaching would last in the present aeon for five thousand years according to the Pali Commentaries.

We as the fortunate few to have been born in this world during this period and able to be benefited from his teachings, show our gratitude to this greatest teacher by offering flowers and reciting a formula assuring our respects for his teachings and for his perfect special qualities that we look up to as the highest a human could achieve. A similar attitude is adopted

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by someone offering flowers or lighting a lamp at a grave or in front of a picture of a dear departed one. This is not a ritual but showing our gratitude to that World - honoured One.

In this practice of Buddha Pooja there is the formula we recite which is also a kind of meditation. Before we recite this formula we take refuge in the Buddha, his teachings or Dhamma and his disciples who had trodden the path and taught the way, as our only guide and example for the liberation from suffering. This verbal expression of our aim is not enough. It will not liberate us as one who seeks out a physician for the cure of a disease and receives a prescription, but continues to recite his belief in the physician and his prescription and does not take the medicine. By it he would not be cured. As he would not be cured from his disease, so would not one be liberated who does not tread the righteous path but continues only to recite faith in the Buddha and his Dhamma.

In the formula recited as a salutation to the Buddha one remembers the nine perfect and special qualities he possessed namely: Arahan, Sammasambuddha, Vijjacarana, Sugata, Lokavidu, Anuttaro Purisadhamma Sarathi, Satta Deva-Manussanam, Buddha and Bhagawa.

ARAHAN - THE FIRST PERFECT QUALITY

The first special quality described as "Arahan" according to the Pali Commentaries has four meanings.

The first meaning is given as the most worthy being in the whole Universe to receive highest respect and offerings. Why is this so? The Buddha when he attained Enlightenment or Buddhahood under the Bodhi tree in Gaya, after six years of toil, eradicated all mental defilements and developed the most pure and perfect status of mind ending all suffering. We respect people who are just learned and those who have attained some degree of mental purity. But the Buddha attained the most purest perfection and there is nothing in this Universe that escaped his knowledge. Thus he is the one worthy of the highest degree of respect.

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One can make offerings to the needy and the poor, the sick and old, parents, teachers, members of the family, friends, the educated, the pious and those who have renounced the world and are practising a path to attain to purity and liberation. The merits or the Karmic forces generated by the offerings through generosity are greater with the greater degree of purity or higher stage of liberation achieved by the recipient.

In the Velama Sutta, the Buddha addressing Anathapindika whose fame for generosity was legendary, said, "Long time ago at a period when teachings of a Buddha was not available, there lived a very wealthy Brahmin called Velama. Out of generosity he gave offerings of food, clothing and other necessary requisites to the priests and the poor and the needy incessantly for seven long years spending his immense wealth. But the merits or Karmic forces generated by him are not comparable to that of one offering made to a person who has attained even the first stage of stream or path to Nibbana (Sothapatti)."

One who practises the Eightfold Path and Insight Meditation when he glimpses the goal or Nibbana is said to have reached the first stage and is called "Sothapatthi or Stream Winner". In reaching this stage he eradicates three mental defilements, Sakkaya Ditthi or belief in ego-entity, Vicikichcha or uncertainty about the Buddha and his path and the like and Seelabbataparamasa or adherence to rites and rituals. Such an one is reborn a maximum of seven lives before he attains Perfection (Arahantship).

The next stage of achievement is Sakudagami or 'once returner' stage. In reaching this stage one attenuates all the remaining mental defilements. Such an one is born only once before reaching Arahantship.

The third stage is Anagami or 'Non-returner' stage. This is reached by completely eradicating lust and ill-will. After reaching this stage if one does not reach the final stage or Arahantship in the same life, he does not return to the worlds of sensuality or lower Brahma realms after death, but is born in a pure abode or 'Suddhavasa' world and attains Arahantship in that world.

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The final stage or Arahantship is attained by destroying the remaining five defilements of the mind namely, attachment to realms of form, attachment to formless realms, mental restlessness, pride and ignorance. An Arahant is not subject to rebirth and also generates no Karmic forces. He, in his thoughts, words or deeds is pure and unselfish. He devotes the rest of his life serving others who seek the way to Nibbana.

There are three modes of attaining Nibbana which are known as threefold Bodhi. These are Sravakabodhi, Paccekabodhi and Sammasambodhi. The first is the attainment of a disciple of a Buddha having learned the path from a Buddha. Higher is the second Bodhi or Paccekabodhi where one attains to the goal on his own effort without any guidance. But he lacks the perfection necessary to develop the power to lead other beings on the path by teaching them. The highest is the Sammasambodhi where one attains Nibbana by his own effort and also develops all perfect special qualities necessary to show the path to countless beings for liberation. As such the Buddha is the most worthy of receiving offerings in the Universe.

Even one single offering made to a Stream-winner (Sothapana) is much more valuable than all the offerings given by Velama in the foregoing story. An offering made to a "Once-returner (Sakadagami) is more valuable than gifts given to a great number of Stream-winners. Offerings made to a great number of Once- returners is not worth a single offering to a Non-returner. A single gift given to an Arahant is much more valuable than gifts given to a great number of Non-returners. A gift given to a Paccekabuddha is more valuable than gifts given to a great number of Arahants. A gift given to a Sammasambuddha is more valuable and far more effective than those offered to a greater number of Arahants. This is because a Sammasambuddha is highest in every aspect like physical appearance, spiritual development, in wisdom and in all worthy qualities. Thus any Sammasambuddha is called "Arahan" the most worthy of offerings and honour because of his singularity, because of his highest most special qualities.

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The second meaning of Arahant is "One who has broken the wheel". The wheel here is the repeated cycle of birth, decay and death in endless lives called Samsara. This never ending cycle is maintained by the Karmic forces generated in the previous lives. One who attained the Nibbana has ceased generating Karmic force. Such an one in his thoughts, deeds and words performed with pure and unselfish motives for the good of all living beings does not generate karmic forces. These are mere actions without any result he would gain and are called "Kriya". Thus the Buddha who has broken the wheel of existence is the highest of all Arahants.

The third meaning of Arahant is destroyer of enemies. Here the enemies are mental defilements or passions of the mind which are to be eradicated to reach Nibbana.

The fourth and last meaning of Arahant is one without secrets. Many a respected leader or teacher has secret vices and fears exposing of such defects. But the Buddha has no such secret vices or sins and his life is open for anyone to see, scrutinize and analyze. He is the perfect being whose image cannot be tarnished.

Thus in reciting this single word "Arahant" we compress all these special perfect qualities into a single perfection.

SAMMASAMBUDDHA - THE SECOND SPECIAL QUALITY

The second perfection of the Buddha is expressed by the word Sammasambuddha. Generally the word Buddha signifies one who has realised the four truths-the truth concerning the unsatisfactory nature of worldly existence, its cause, its direct opposite state and the way to attain this state. There are three kinds of such Buddhas: an Arahant Buddha, a PaccekaBuddha and a Sammasambuddha. Out of these three a Sammasambuddha is far superior than the other two. He has realized the four noble truths by treading the path discovered by himself with no guidance from anyone whatsoever (which a Pacceka Buddha also has done) and is perfect in wisdom, pure in every aspect and perfect in

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following the conventional code of etiquette (which a Pacceka Buddha is not). A Sammasambuddha is referred to in the saying "there appears very seldom on earth a unique person a peerless teacher of the world".

A Sammasambuddha discerns clearly the temperament or level of development of mind of a person to whom he addresses for the purpose of instructing him and issues instructions suitable to his condition for his mental development. An Arahant is not able to do this perfectly. In the Buddhist texts one comes across the same facts expounded in a variety of ways. This difference is due to his way of instructing different listeners in different ways suitable for the temperament of each person.

As he is perfect in every aspect he never speaks or does anything irresolutely. His aim is to guide people along the path of progress in the present and the life to come, and to guide the suffering world away from it.

One might ask whether the Buddha has said anything about the world system, its origin and so on. He was like the physician who when confronted with a patient diagnoses the disease and prescribes a suitable treatment but does not wander from his aim by teaching geography and the like to the patient. A Sammasambuddha also who sees the intense ignorance and the horrible suffering beings undergo thereby, never goes out of his aim, other than to save them from their intense ignorance as to their own unhappy nature. He uses every minute of his life for this purpose. He does not waste time on things not useful for this aim.

Thus a Sammsambuddha is called such or The fully enlightened one because, from his full realization of all nature he practises it according to his aim of teaching perfectly, the unsatisfactory nature of life in the world, the cause of its rise and continuity, the real happiness and the path to it.

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VIJJA - CARANA -THE THIRD SPECIAL QUALITY

In these two words it is indicated that the Buddha is endowed with Vijja and Carana. Here Vijja means supreme knowledge. The knowledge here refers to three kinds of clear vision, namely recollection and seeing the past events, clear vision of the present and future events and the perfect vision of the nature of life.

Vision or recollection of the past events:

The Buddha during his very numerous past lives has practised Samadhi or concentration of the mind and through this practice of jhanas or intense concentration of mind had developed the psychic eye to see the past births. Therefore in the last life in which he attained to Buddhahood, he was able to easily develop concentration of mind and attain to the visions of the past. By means of this power he could see all past births and past events related to the Universe. This does not mean that he was always and every moment seeing the past. It is not so. When he wants to see a past event related to anyone he enters the concentrated state of the fourth jhana at once and after waking up from it he adverts his power of recollection towards the event or the birth he wants to see. Immediately he sees the event very clearly.

There are six kinds of persons who can recollect the past lives or events. Yogis of some other religions, some ordinary disciples of the Buddha, the great disciples of the Buddha like Maha-Kassapa, the two chief disciples of the Buddha, Paccekabuddhas and Sammasambuddhas. Yogis and the like can develop the recollection of past up to forty cappas (aeons) back only. Their power of recollection is also not very clear. It is said that they see the past just as a person sees something in the night by the light of a glow worm. An ordinary disciple of the Buddha who has developed this power can see clearer than a Yogi of another religion. His vision is described as that of a person who can see in the dark by a candle light.

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The great disciple of the Buddha can see further back than the above two categories and still clearer, just as a person sees in the dark with the help of a torch. The chief disciples of the Buddha - Sariputta and Moggallana could see further into the past than the last category and also still clearer as a person sees in the dark by the light of the morning star.

A Paccekabuddha is able to see clearer than the chief disciples of the Buddha. This vision is comparable to a person seeing in the night by the light of the full moon.

A Sammasambuddha or an omniscient Buddha can recollect past events as far back as he wants to see without limitation as to the time. His power of recollection is also clearer and is compared to the full daylight in the autumn. He has this power when he adverts his faculty of recollection towards it only.

Thus one of the Buddha's perfect faculty of vision meant by the word Vijja is this full power of remembering past events without limitation and clearly.

The divine eye:

A person who expects to attain the divine eye or genuine clairvoyance, should first develop mental concentration by means of white Kasina, light Kasina or fire Kasina (white colour, a light or a fire as an object), till he attains to the fourth level or grade of calmness of mind called jhana. Before the practice, he should have made his determination, to extend his jhanic light at the thing he wants to see, immediately he wakes up from the fourth jhana. After making this resolve he enters the fourth jhana and remains in it as long as he wishes. When he wakes up from this jhana he sees the light around him. Now he is able to extend the light as far as the thing he wishes to see is. With this divine eye he is able to see even a dying person just at the moment preceding his death as well as immediately after he is born (or conceived) according to the Karmic influence

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A yogi of a different faith who develops this power can see in the future for only up to forty aeons. A disciple of a Buddha can see further and a Paccekabuddha can see still further. The power of a Sammasambuddha in this faculty is unlimited.

Asavakhsaya-kara-nana:

This is the knowledge or introspection by means of which he rooted out all mental cankers. Mental cankers are known as Asava. They are three in number, namely canker of sensuality, canker of the attachment to the world (the existence) and the canker of nescience or Avijja which deprives beings of reasoning and misleads them. Avijja is the origin and the source of all worldliness and detains and holds beings down in the world. Here the term world is used to embrace the whole mundane existence in the sensual plane (happy and unhappy), the plane of fine material existence (Rupa oka) and the spiritual plane or plane of sheer mental existence (arupavacara oka). The Buddha destroyed all these cankers by means of this highest wisdom called Asavakhsaya-kara-nana which is one of the Vijja.

The Buddha in addition to the three Vijja as described above is endowed with the perfection of carana. Carana means that by which we are able to proceed or what we call feet. Here the carana are the spiritual feet which helped him to climb up to the Buddhahood and to carry out his unselfish service to the suffering world.

There are fifteen such feet or caranas. The first is the perfect moral conduct or character which can be categorised under the eight precepts called Ajivatthamaka-sila. These are, refraining from eight unwholesome ways namely, killing (Panatipata), taking what is not given (Adinnadana), a life devoted to sensuality (Abrahmacariya), Falsehood, Slandering and backbiting, harsh speech, gossip and wrong livelihood (miccha-jiva). All the good conduct and keeping precepts or Patimokkha rules of Buddhist monks are included in these eight precepts

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The second carana or foot is sense-restraint or control of the senses. The restraint of senses like eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body does not mean shutting out these senses. When a person sees, hears... he should be mindful and fully aware of the real nature of the object. For example when one sees a person of the opposite sex considered to be beautiful or handsome, he should understand that this quality of beauty is only skin deep and consists of a skeleton encased by flesh, sinews, blood, pus, excrement and many more loathsome and foul smelling things. The other senses also have to be faced standing on the same ground of awareness.

The third foot is Bhojane Mattannuta (knowing how and why food is taken). Food is to be taken to suppress hunger and for the purpose of keeping life in health. A virtuous man does not take food to gather strength and vigour from the motive of enjoying sensual pleasures or to be skilled in sports and gymnastic feats and the like. One should avoid greediness too. A holy man's motive of taking food is unselfish service to the suffering world.

The next spiritual foot is Jagariyanuyoga which means keeping awake in the night. The disciples of Buddha specially those who practise meditation keep themselves wakeful whether they sit, stand, walk up and down or lying down, diverting their mind towards the practice they follow. Their time of sleep is not long. As regards Buddha having finished all practices and attained to perfection, he passed his time in service to the suffering world and rested only for a short time to keep his body healthy. He is supposed to have slept only one sixth of the night time. The night was divided into three watches. In the evening during the first watch he preached or gave instructions to his human followers. During the middle watch only the non-humans like devas came to the Buddha and he answered their questions and gave instructions. First part of the third watch was spent in pacing up and down for a short time (after all the non-human beings were gone), to free his body from stiffness and tiredness. Second part was for lying down and resting. In the third part having woken up he diverted his concentrated mind to look for beings who have developed their minds and require his services to be guided, in deep and great compassion.

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The fifth spiritual foot is Saddha, the self confidence. The Buddha as he knew he had attained to perfection was self confident and feared not to face any problem or person. This fearless quality is not found even in Paccekabuddhas, let alone disciples of Buddha. This is a very rare and special quality found in a Buddha and not to be found either in any other human or a god whatever.

The sixth and seventh spiritual feet are Hiri and Otappa. Hiri means disgust to do evil deeds and Otappa is ability to see clearly the result of evil deeds. Even before he attained to Buddhahood, the Buddha had refrained from evil ways. After being perfect it is natural that he is not at all inclined towards them.

The eighth spiritual foot is Bahusrutta which means possession of gathered knowledge. The Buddha who discovered the way and attained to perfection, without any teacher had no equal in knowledge and wisdom.

The ninth foot is endeavour, the tenth mindfulness, eleventh insight and the other four are the four stages of intense concentration of mind known as jhanas.

In all these fifteen caranas nobody in the Universe, no spiritual teacher, or a being in the deva worlds, or Brahma is as perfect as the Buddha. Thus in Vijja and Carana or wisdom and spiritual feet Buddha is supreme and no one is equal to him.

SUGATA -THE FOURTH SPECIAL QUALITY

The fourth special quality of the Buddha is denoted by the word 'Sugato'. Literally Sugata means well gone one or one who has gone in the right manner. When he was a Bodhisatta aspiring for the Buddhahood, the Buddha practised and perfected the tenfold virtues during a long series of lives without any attachment to the worldly gain, with the only purpose of Buddhahood as the end. Here his journey through Samsara was excellent as its end or destination was the most excellent Nibbana or eternal peace.

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People make journeys for various purposes. Some to see games and sports activities, some to see beautiful sceneries and places, some to win competitions and so on. All these journeys are for a selfish end. But the journey of a Bodhisatta through a succession of recurring births (Samsara) was made to fulfil virtues to develop the mind to find the way to release the world from suffering. By attaining to Buddhahood he accomplished this aim. As it was purely for the sake of others, this journey was the excellent or well-gone journey.

As the prince Siddharta he went forth from home to homeless life. Though he went through a hard life during his ascetic practices for six years, he did not turn back in despair or defeat to homely life at any stage. His journey was forward till he attained to Enlightenment. During this period by his practice of Samatha and Vipassana meditation he passed all the jhanas and rooted out all mental defilements at various stages of the holy path to Enlightenment. Thus his going forth was the right one. Therefore in this way also the Buddha has gone well.

Beings in their faring in the world fall into either a life of sensuality or a life of self mortification. In his path to enlightenment the Buddha avoided both these extremes and followed the middle path or via media. This is the right way, in other words described as the path of eight factors namely, the right view, right thought, right speech, right deed, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness and right concentration. As he went along this middle path and made others also go along the same way he is called the well-gone one or Sugata.

In their views on life many teachers went towards the belief of the existence of an ego-entity or soul (Sassata-ditthi). Others went towards the nihilistic belief and said life ended at death there being no soul to continue life after death. The Buddha sided with neither of these views. He taught there was no permanent entity called the soul but there was a stream of mind-units every one of which vanishes in a moment and gives rise to another mind-unit of the same series. Thus he taught that beings have no souls but there is a flux or flow of psycho-physical states which are subject to change. It is this stream of mind-units that flows to cling to a suitable

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physical form of existence at death. This is the middle way or path he took to explain his view, an excellent or good path. Therefore he is called well-gone one or Sugata.

There is another meaning to the word Sugata. In the Pali language Sugata means good speech. In practice the part 'da' is changed to 'ta' thus Sugata meaning good speech. The Buddha never spoke words that are untrue, conducive to harm anyone or unwelcome to the hearers. Hence he is called Sugata or one with good speech.

Thus as explained above the Buddha is called Sugata because he went along the right path and made others also to follow this excellent path and spoke good words always for the benefit of others.

LOKA-VIDU -THE FIFTH SPECIAL QUALITY

One special quality of the Buddha is that he knows the nature of all worlds or the Universe. He has said that the space is infinite and that there is no beginning or end. Therefore in the Universe there are innumerable world systems or to use the modern term galaxies.

Though the Buddha saw the nature of all the world systems, he had no intention of describing its geographical or geological or astronomical aspect. He used only the part of this vast knowledge conducive to hearers for getting rid of suffering they have undergone .

He has classified the world systems in his teachings in many ways. What is described here as an example is only one of his classifications. In this classification he had divided the worlds into three categories; worlds of animated beings, worlds of conditioned things and worlds of location.

Animated beings are again divided into three groups: those consisting of five aggregates, those consisting of four aggregates and those consisting of one aggregate.

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All beings (including humans) of the sensual sphere (Kamalokas) and all the Brahma realms except Asannasatta Brahmaloaka are beings composed of five aggregates of existence namely, material body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness. All these five aggregates can be expressed in two groups as material body and mental body.

Asannasattas are a kind of beings in a Brahma-sphere who exists as material bodies without any kind of thinking, like statues, but potentiality for mind to exist in a dormant state is present. They are called the beings of Eka-vokara-bhava that is beings possessing only the material existence. Some human beings believe that it is the mind which is the cause of suffering and that if the act of thinking is suppressed the suffering would cease. Accordingly they follow a system of meditation to suppress the rising of thoughts and are successful in their efforts to do so. Asannasattas are those beings who as a result of this meditation are born with one aggregate, that is only the material body. But the Buddha did not value this state as it was still not the liberation from Samsara. When the force of suppressing the rising of thoughts is exhausted they die at that very moment and are born in another place with five aggregates (Kamalokas).

There is another category of beings who are composed of mind only. Here when we say mind, four aggregates are implied, namely feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness. Some beings who are disgusted with material existence of life practise a kind of meditation enabling them to suppress the rise of a material body. It is they who are reborn into this sphere of sheer mental life. They who are composed of these four aggregates, when their force to suppress the material existence is exhausted, will be born again in another sphere where there is psycho-physical existence.

The world of conditioned things is called Sankhara-oka. All inanimate and material parts of animated things. If this matter is divided one is left with atoms. Atoms are in turn divisible into subatomic particles which can be described as particles or energy. So is the description given by the Buddha that every material thing consists of four elements and are conditioned by them. Our bodies are conditioned by Karmic forces

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accumulated in the previous lives, Uttuja or world energy, Cittaja or mental energy and food. The mind is conditioned by sensory organs. If the light from a visible object contacts the eye organ, this is felt provided the eye is healthy. This in turn is perceived by the mind and the consciousness arises. Similarly with the ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Thus everything in this universe is conditioned and is called Sankhara-oka.

The space is infinite and there is no beginning and an end. If you go backward in time or in any direction in space you cannot find a limit when and where there was no space. This infinite space is called the Universe. It is pervaded with energy and there is no spot where there is no energy. This space with energy is nature itself. It has negative and positive sides. This energy is not stagnant. It is dynamic in nature and always changes into different forms. One form of its evolution is to form matter as planets and stars. In the space there was no time when there were no stars and planets. They arise from time to time due to the evolving power of energy in the Universe. Some are solid and others are subtle or formed by fine matter. These worlds are found all over this infinite space in the form of thousands and millions and trillions and they are in various stages of evolution. Some are being formed. Some are fully formed. Some are decaying and evolving back to energy (undergoing destruction). These world systems are called galaxies in the modern language.

Some of these worlds contain subtle beings who are in a happy state. These locations are called Deva-lokas - the location of happy beings with subtle or fine bodies. Some worlds have passionless and much developed beings. Some worlds have beings full of misery who are subject to incessant suffering. Some worlds where the beings have a solid body are called human worlds. All beings are born in various locations according to the karmic forces they have performed in their previous lives.

Thus in the above brief descriptions it is clear that the worlds in the universe are diverse in nature. The Buddha saw and knew all these worlds and their features. But out of this vast knowledge of the universe he did speak only of very little. He imparted the little that is enough to lead beings to freedom from suffering.

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Once the Buddha took four leaves to his hand while travelling through a forest and made his disciples compare them with other leaves in the forest. He said "Monks, the knowledge I possess is much more than the number of leaves in this forest. What I have taught and teach you is like the four leaves in my hand and that is the only knowledge that is necessary for you to realise the four truths (suffering, cause of suffering, opposite of suffering or Nibbana and the path to it) and to lead you to liberation from suffering".

Thus because he has the knowledge about the variety of worlds in the universe he is called Loka-vidu (Knower of the worlds).

ANUTTARO PURISADHAMMA SARATHI - THE SIXTH SPECIAL QUALITY.

Patients presented to a physician are of two kinds, some suffering from curable diseases and some suffering from incurable diseases. He can successfully treat only the first kind. But he cannot ignore the second category who have to be treated to live their lives less painfully as possible. But the patients with curable diseases are treated with much care and attention lest their ailments would progress and become incurable.

Similarly there are two kinds of beings to be found among beings of the universe the tamable and the untamable. Here the tamable means beings who can be coached up to go along the path till they attain liberation and become Arahants. The untamable are beings who have not evolved enough to attain liberation and beings who have incorrigibly corrupted themselves. The latter should not be ignored but should be helped as much as possible to improve themselves to become able to get into the path even after thousands of lives. But the tamable are to be given careful attention lest they might become untamable.

Tamers in this respect are of two kinds. Buddhas and their disciples or Savakas. The disciples will be able to help others after obtaining instructions from the Perfect Buddhas (Sammāsambuddhas).

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The only person who can guide others along the path to perfection using his wisdom is the Sammasambuddha. Therefore he is known as Anuttara Purisadhamma Sarathi. One of the special qualities the Buddha possessed was this supreme ability to tame the tamable. Here is an illustration. Among the disciples of the Buddha there were two brothers who had left home for homeless life. The elder brother known as Maha-Panthaka had attained to Arahantship before long, after following the instructions of the Buddha. The younger brother known as Culla-Panthaka was under the care of the elder brother who, gave him instructions to follow. But the younger one was unable to remember the instructions however much he tried. Thus all efforts were in vain. So Maha-Panthaka came to the conclusion that Cull-Panthaka was not evolved enough to achieve any spiritual progress and advised him to, leave the order of monks and lead a righteous house-holder's life. Cull-Panthaka obeying his elder brother decided to leave the Order.

It is the tradition of all Buddhas to survey the world early morning every day with the divine eye for the purpose of finding the tamable who would require their services. On the very day Culla-Panthaka was preparing to leave the order, the Buddha saw that he possessed the potentiality to attain Arahantship provided he received the correct guidance. The Buddha appeared in person and inquired from Cull-Panthaka why he was preparing to leave the order. When the young monk related the whole incident the Buddha advised him not to abandon his efforts and gave him a special instruction. Culla-Panthaka following the Buddha's instruction was able to attain Arahantship, with full psychic powers in a short time. In this instant Maha-Panthaka, although being a great Arahant was not able to discern his brother's mental tendency and thus failed in his attempt to instruct him to follow the path. But the Buddha was able to see the proper mental tendency and successfully instructed Culla-Panthaka to attain Arahantship.

The novice Rahula (son of prince Siddharata - before he attained Enlightenment) was ordained as a pupil of the chief disciple Sariputta the great who trained and guided him along the path of spiritual guidance to a great extent. But the method of meditation given to Rahula by Great

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Sariputta was not appropriate to attain to Arahantship. The Buddha saw this and changed the method and Rahula, using this method was able to become an Arahant. There are many such instances that illustrate how the Buddha tamed persons who had the potentiality but were not tamable by others.

There are many beings human and non-human who were uncontrollable by others, but were controlled and tamed by the Buddha. Angulimala the highway robber, Nalagiri the drunk elephant, Succaka the unconquerable logician, Sakka the ruler of the lower realms of Deva worlds, the Brahma-god Baka, vicious Naga-spirit Apalala and Yakka Alavaka are some, that could not be controlled by others but easily tamed by the Buddha using the ability to teach and sometimes using psychic powers.

Thus among the teachers of the world the Buddha was given the appellation as Anuttaro Purisadhamma Sarathi, the supreme tamer of the tamable.

SATTA DEVAMNAUSSANAM -THE SEVENTH SPECIAL QUALITY

A nation or a tribe or a group of people who expect some progress require a teacher or a leader to guide them along the way to the goal they expect to attain. Even among animals you find one the strongest of all to lead them.

Progress is twofold, mundane and supramundane. From the Buddhist point of view mundane progress is divided into two, the progress in this life and the progress to be awaited in the life to come after death.

As regards the progress in this world, the Buddha gave instructions in many ways which we find in the Bhoganisansa Sutta (the discourse about how to earn wealth), Catu-sampada Sutta (four things to fulfil) and the like.

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In Vyaggha-pajja Sutta, Nijjaya Sutta and the like we find the instructions for the progress in this life and in the life after death.

He has shown the way to a happy birth we can achieve after death among men, among gods and among higher gods called Brahmas.

Many teachers who appeared in the world from time to time have given some good instructions for the world of progress. But if we carefully examine them we would find that in many aspects they are not perfect. Some of them have encouraged to kill animals for sacrifice, some have taught it was not wrong to kill animals for one's food and the like. Some have encouraged waging wars against their enemies. In books of some religions we find their prophets have encouraged even adultery and taking liquor on some occasions.

But when we read the moral code given by the Buddha we would find how perfect it is, compared with the moral codes of other teachers.

The Buddha has advised us to abstain from all wrong deeds, from all wrong speeches, from all wrong thinking. He advised us to keep the precepts and build good characters, to develop mind's calm by development of concentration, and to develop insight by practice of Vipassana.

Though not perfectly, other teachers have taught to build good character and develop mind's calm partly. But none of them has even dreamt of the way to develop insight.

If we carefully read the Three Pitaka, we would find how the Buddha has taught the perfect way of self development consisting of Seela, Samadhi and Panna (moral conduct, mind's calm and full wisdom). He not only pointed out the way to men but also to gods and Brahmas (higher gods). His instructions were given to suit the hearer's temperament and therefore his teachings were fruitful and incomparable in all aspects.

That is why he was called the Incomparable teacher or the supreme teacher of gods and men.

BUDDHA -THE EIGHTH SPECIAL QUALITY

The eighth special quality of the Buddha has been expressed by the term 'Buddha'. The word Buddha has many meanings. Two are most important. One is the person who has realised the four great truths and has made others realize the same. We have explained this point in the description of the word Sammasambuddha.

The other meaning is the one who has awakened himself as well as others from the sleep and long slumber of Nescience (Avijja).

It is the nescience or Avijja or dense ignorance as to the nature of life that binds the beings in the Samsara, the cycle of rebirth. The best of knowledge or understanding is the knowledge or understanding of one's own life, for if he has not understood 'what he himself is', his knowledge is not perfect. Even though he has many titles as a result of passing examinations, if he has not realized 'himself', it is possible to commit any evil, unless he is mindful and vigilant of himself. A person who has realized 'himself' perfectly would never commit any evil, he would never fall into unmindfulness.

But this self realization is barred by his ignorance as to what he really is. What we call 'I', 'he', 'she', man, animal and the like is nothing but a psycho-physical process, a continuity of mental and material states (Nama and Rupa), from the ultimate point of view.

Thus what we call 'I' is a process of mind-units and matter-units proceeding inter-dependently. Apart from these states there is nothing to be found in the so called 'I','he', 'she' or animated being.

Of that process, every mind unit as well as its characteristics is subject to momentary vanishing, giving way to another one to arise. The physical body is a collection of matter-units continually arising and vanishing. Thus within the so called 'I' there is nothing permanent, nothing at rest or static, and nothing to be taken as an ego-entity. When one realizes perfectly this true nature of oneself, one has become perfect.

Special Qualities of the Buddha

But Avijja the nescience darkens the beings and prevents them from perceiving this truth. Therefore this nescience is called the long slumber. The Buddha, going along the path he had discovered by himself, wakened himself from this slumber of nescience, and also made other beings too, wakened from the same.

Therefore he is called the Buddha (the one who has awakened himself and awakened others from the slumber of Avijja (nescience or dense ignorance)).

BHAGAVA -THE NINTH SPECIAL QUALITY

The ninth special quality of the Buddha is given under the name Bhagava. Bhagawa means the Blessed one, the fortunate one. This blissfulness is described in commentaries in many ways. Out of these, six are most important .

The first fortune is his supreme capacity to control or lead himself as well as others. In this the Buddha was able to maintain perfect supremacy over his mind. This quality which most teachers did not display under trying circumstances was present in the Buddha to the highest degree. He maintained a peaceful and calm mind under any circumstance that presented. He was also capable of attaining supremacy over anyone or anything. This included psychic powers, for there is no one comparable to the Buddha in this aspect. Wherever he was, his supremacy over everyone was distinctly seen and no one could exceed his wishes.

The second fortune is moral conduct and spiritual or mental development. There were so many teachers and leaders who were held in high esteem for moral conduct. But in Seela or moral conduct none of them could be compared with the Buddha. His moral conduct and courtesy was exemplary whether in mind, speech or action. His spiritual development or Samadhi was the most highest any being attained. In concentration, in jhanas, nobody could rise above him. The supramundane

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state or Nibbana and the path to it that he discovered and taught is the highest that a being can achieve.

The third fortune is his glory or renown and the immense retinue. His fame and greatness spread not only in this world. It is said that when he gave his first sermon the news spread in thousands of world systems in the universe, 'that the Lord Buddha has turned the wheel of Dhamma'. Beginning with all countries in the Indian peninsula his fame and glory spread all over the world. Even now after twenty five centuries it is still spreading, and learned people marvel when they read his biography and teaching. As for the retinue, beginning with five disciples, among humans within a short period of six months over one thousand five hundred disciples followed him. Soon this number exceeded ten thousands, hundred thousands and millions in India alone. Over twenty five centuries all over the world his disciples in the form of monks, nuns, lay disciples of both sexes increased. This is in addition to countless other non human beings like Devas, Brahmas of other realms. In these aspects also there is no one comparable to the Buddha.

The fourth fortune was his physical body. He possessed a physical body of incomparable beauty. His body is described to have had thirty two chief physical characteristics and hundreds of minor characteristics of beauty of a great person. Even in the Deva or Brahma worlds there was nobody who had such a perfect physical body.

Fifthly he was fortunate in that he succeeded in every wish he entertained. From the time of Deepankara Buddha when as the ascetic Sumedha he wished to become a Sammsambuddha to save innumerable beings from suffering, he succeeded in fulfilling the ten Paramitas or perfection over millions of lives to achieve this wish. He also accomplished his wish to attain to Buddhahood as prince Siddharta and accomplished the wish to save incalculable number of beings from suffering, among humans, Devas, and Brahmas. Nobody could dissuade him or stop him in any of these wishes.

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The sixth blessing is his indefatigable and dauntless energy and courage. From the time as Sumedha the ascetic, when he made his vow to become Buddha, he practised the ten perfection over countless lives with energy and courage that could not be stopped by anyone. In attaining these perfection of morality, generosity and concentration of mind, he exhibited unlimited energy. As prince Siddharta when he renounced a life of luxury to become an ascetic and followed many ways including self mortification for six years, he showed unlimited energy and courage. After attaining to Buddhahood for over forty five years up to the last moment he showed unbound energy in saving innumerable beings from suffering.

These fore mentioned six characteristics brought him the title Bhagava or the blessed one or fortunate one.

CHAPTER THREE

TAKING OF REFUGE IN PRACTICE

People of a village were suffering from various chronic diseases. Although they sought treatment from the physicians amongst them they could not obtain perfect cure for the diseases, though some of them had temporary relief. Then a stranger came to the village. Very few people of the village understood that the stranger was perfect in health and knew the treatment for all diseases and he could restore them to perfect health. Those who underwent his treatment were cured perfectly. They, too, learned from him his medical system and assisted him in treating the sick. After some years' of service the teacher-physician turned over his services to his pupils and left the village. His pupil physicians, who were now in perfect health carried on the service of treating the sick very successfully.

Some of their patients, while undergoing the course of treatment, were also following another system secretly, which made their ailments worse. The pupil-physicians discovered the secret and promulgated a plan to keep them from following wrong ways. They advised the patients to remember that they were following the course of treatment established by their foremost physician, the specialist. They made them repeat the formula, "I take refuge in the foremost physician, the specialist, his system of treatment and the example and admonition given by his pupil physicians". This method worked very successfully for some period of time. These patients and their physicians were named and labelled as 'the followers of the specialist' to make themselves distinct from those who followed other systems of treatment, who too, were bearing labels after the system each followed.

Later on the majority of the followers of the specialist, only repeated their refuge formula but did not follow the treatment. Only in name were they the followers of the specialist but not in practice.

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To make the point still clearer, I should give another illustration. There was a village in the midst of a vast jungle. This village was infested with harmful insects, interspersed with snakes and haunted by carnivorous animals. One of the villagers, a very clever person carefully explored the jungle and reaching its boundary discovered a place, a city of perfect safety, which was beyond of all kinds of dangers the village was subjected to. Then he returned to the village marking out the way to the city carefully, the way to be trodden to reach the place. Thereupon he explained to the villagers the glad tidings of the discovery of the city and the path thereto. Some villagers followed this path reached the city and its bliss of security. They too, returned to the village and witnessed the genuineness of the discovery, and encouraged others to proceed on the path marked out by the clever person.

There were some others who also discovered the boundary of the jungle which was less dangerous than the village and decided this was the safe sanctuary, though it was not entirely so. These persons also guided some villagers to this spot. Thus there were many paths marked out by different guides, marked and known separately after the name of their founders. Many villagers, as they were desperate to get out of dangers of the village, chose a path according to his inclination and set out on the journey. But those who were more critical and much more wiser, preferred to follow the path to the city of safety. After some of years of showing the path he discovered, the discoverer went to the city of safety and took rest there. Thereafter his followers carried on with the service of showing the path.

As time passed some travellers bound for the safe city lost their way due to forgetfulness and were stranded in the jungle. So the followers of the discoverer gave them a formula to repeat, so that they would not lose their way. This formula helped many villagers to follow the path to its end. Now the number of villagers getting ready to follow the path increased steadily, but very few set out on the journey. The majority learned the formula and repeated it turning their heads towards the path every day, but did not start the journey. Looking back at their possessions in the village like huts and small gardens, they put off their journey every

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day. In the meantime they criticized the followers of other discoverers, saying that they were going in the wrong path. Even some guides who were supposed to show the way did not proceed in the path and also were quarrelling with the villagers over their possessions, in the meantime claiming they were the ones who knew the path.

A person who wants to go to a certain destination, goes to a bus station, buys a ticket and loiters about, explaining to everyone about the value of the ticket, the bus service, the driver and the destination, even composing songs of praise. In the evening he goes home. This is repeated every day. For such a person neither the ticket, nor the bus or its driver can be reckoned to have been his refuge. He cannot be taken as a person who has actually taken refuge in them, as he never got into the bus to proceed to his destination.

The Buddha was the one who discovered the way to full freedom from suffering. Hence we respect him as our foremost teacher of the Path, the guide and the refuge. If there was no path to tread, even he could not have helped us. Similarly if there is no goal, the path or the guide would not be of any help. So the guide, the path and the goal are our refuge. Those who followed the path he showed, and attained freedom, witnessed the genuine quality of the destination, and became our helpers setting an example and giving out their experience. We have to follow the way, having learned the path. Repeating the formula of taking refuge reminds us not to lose our way. The path and the goal are represented by the Dhamma. The followers who have gone forth and entered the stream (Sotapatti) and attained the further stages and finally the Arahantship are represented by the Sangha.

Repeating the formula of taking refuge is repeating the reminder not to lose the way. Unless we go along the path we cannot be considered as those who practise the taking of refuge.

Eightfold path is the best of paths.

Four Noble Truths is the best of truths.

Passionless state is the best of states.

Special Qualities of the Buddha

One with the opened eyes is the best of bipeds.
(273 Dhammapada)

*Follow the path, for, this bewilders Mara the tempter.
Treading this path, ye shall end all suffering.
I have discovered and pointed out the path ,
the way leading to removal of arrow of passion
You yourself should make the effort,
the Buddhas only expound the way.*

(276Dhammapada.)

CHAPTER FIVE

HOUSEHOLD LIFE

Some scholars who have read very little of Buddhist literature have stated that Buddhism is a religion meant only for persons who have renounced household life. Others have tried to portray it as a kind of pessimistic religion. Still others, out of poor knowledge or prejudice have declared it a religion hostile to worldly progress.

But the unprejudiced and open minded scholars have honestly and openly praised it and declared its greatness and practicability for every stage of life and every type of situation. One of the great Pali scholars, the late Mr. Rhys Davis in his introduction to the English translation of Sigalovada Suttanta in Dhiga- Nikaya said, "This Suttanta is called the Vinaya (the moral code) of the Houseman. Hence..... in one who practises what he has been taught in it, growth is to be looked for, and not decay, and truly we may say even now of this code of discipline, so fundamental are the human interests involved, so sane and wide is the wisdom that envisages them, that the utterances are as fresh and practically binding today and here as they were than at Rajagaha. Happy would have been the village or the clan on the banks of the Ganges, where people were full of the kindly spirit of fellow-feeling, the noble spirit of justice which breathes through these naive and simple sayings. Not less happy would be the village, or the family on the banks of the Thames today, of which this could be said".

The world is like a school in which there are beings of varied mental levels. A teacher uses toys and pictures and the like when he teaches the children of the kindergarten section. To the boys of the middle forms lessons of a suitable standard are taught, in a suitable manner. Higher forms are given lessons of higher standards. The Buddha saw the world as a school of many forms and gave instructions suitable to the level of mental development of the beings he instructed. This is shown by the

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story of the poor brahmin who came to see him before going to a distant city seeking his fortune. Buddha gave him instructions to him to be successful in his endeavour, and the brahmin following the instructions became a rich man. On another occasion the inhabitants of a village called Veludvara-gama, invited the Buddha to instruct them to lead a life of peace in the present life and to be born in a happy state after death. The Buddha gave instructions accordingly for them to achieve these goals.

The Buddha has expounded the merits of accumulation of wealth. In a discourse addressed to Anathapindika of legendary fame for generosity, he said, "Householder there are five merits of having wealth. What are the five?

A wealthy person can lead a happy and long life having his needs supplied with his wealth.

A wealthy person can look after his parents when they are sick, old or in need of his support.

A wealthy person can support his wife and children supplying all their needs.

A wealthy person can help his relatives, friends, employees and other.

A wealthy person can support recluses and priests and the like, who have given up household life to devote their time for spiritual development and gain merit thereby, and ensure he is born into a happy state after death."

In the Mangala Sutta, the Buddha has expounded thirty eight actions that lead to beatitude. Out of these in his own words, "Mata-pitu upatthanam" or looking after the parents is an important one. So is "Putta-darassa sangaho" or looking after wife and children. "Natakananca sangaho" which means to treat relatives and friends, is another.

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In many of his discourses the Buddha advises his followers to work for the well being both of oneself and of others, "Ubhayattha-patipada".

According to some religions it is hard for a rich man to enter heaven. But according to the Buddha, it is easier for a rich man to enter heaven, provided he spends his wealth properly, fulfilling his duties. It is not wealth but miserliness and other wrong ways that are often cultivated by some wealthy people that obstruct the way to heaven. Therefore the Buddha said, "Na ve kadariya-Deva-lokam vajanti" which means the miserly cannot go to heaven (whether they are rich or poor).

The Buddha praised the wealthy who are generous in the saying, "Datva ca bhutva ca yathanubhavam - Anindito saggamupeti thanam" , which means, the generous man who help others and enjoys himself too, is praised here and will go to heaven after death.

The Buddha also gave advice on earning wealth as well as using the wealth wisely. In many discourses like Ujjaya Sutta, Vyagghapajja Sutta, Sigalovada Sutta, instructions for success in earning wealth have been mentioned in detail.

In the Vyagghapajja Sutta, the Buddha describes the qualities one should have or cultivate to Vyagghapajja the Kolian.

"To be successful in business or other pursuits, a person should be endowed with four qualities, namely Utthana-sampada, Arakkha-sampada, Kalyanamittata and Samajivikata.

"The first one Utthana-sampada is indefatigable effort. A businessman should be energetic and active, and should not be deterred by cold, heat, rain and the like. If he fails due to various obstacles he should not lose heart, but try again and again. Success will come to one who does not give up trying. In his plans he should be mindful, far-seeing and cautious.

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"The second quality is awareness to protect what one earns. There are many ways one can waste or lose his wealth., and therefore he must be vigilant and careful in protecting it from these ways. Fire, flood, an ill-disposed heir, bad habits like gambling,debauchery in sex and liquor are ways of destruction of wealth. Loyalty and honesty with government prevents fines and confiscations. In short many ways of degradation of a person also would bring his ruin.

"The third quality, Kalyana-mittata means having good companions, who instruct, help and encourage him in improving his business. If one is unable to have such good and well intentioned companions, it is better to keep oneself to oneself rather than have ill intentioned companions, who would lead him to lose his wealth. (No ce labhetha nipakam sahayam... eko care khagga-visana-kappo) If you cannot find a good companion, go alone fearless like the unicorn, and do not contact bad companions.

"The fourth quality, Samajivikata means an even and simple way of living. A person in business should spend money carefully so that his expenditure does not exceed his income. He should be watchful that his income and expenses balance well like a sharp salesman watching the scales so that it is not unevenly tipped. A person who imitates the ways of a rich man while earning a small income would reach ruin very rapidly. This does not mean that one should be mean and stingy. Such a person's wealth is of no use to him. "

In Sigalovada-sutta (in the Digha-nikaya), we see the Buddha advising the youth Sigalaka, how to use wealth in the following stanza:

*"Ekena bhoge bhunjeyya, dvihi kamman payojaye-
Catuttam ca nidhapeyya, apadasu bhavissati."*

Let him divide the income into four portions. One to be used for daily expenses, two for the progress of the business and the last to be deposited carefully for the use in future and in any case of failure or bankruptcy.

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The Buddha did not praise poverty at any stage. His words were, "Daliddiyam dukkham loke kamabhogino", which means poverty is an ordeal for a person living a household life .

The Buddha advised householders to try to earn wealth and to spend it properly so that their lives are useful .

On another occasion the Buddha said, "A salesman should know the quality of goods he buys. He should know their price and the amount of profit he would gain on the sale of those goods. He should be skilled in the art of buying and selling. He should be honest and trustworthy so that any rich person would deposit their money without fear under his care." (*Anguttara Nikaya I, p 116*).

Again his advice to a trader was that he should be active in his business throughout all three parts of the daytime: morning, noon and afternoon and that if he is inactive and lazy he would not be successful. (*Ang.I, pp114, 115*).

There are some people who are satisfied with a little income and live a simple life. But if a person expects to do great service, to help the people who are in need of his help, he should try to earn wealth by right means. In achieving this, instructions given by the Buddha are helpful.

When the Buddha visited the village called Pataligama, his advice to lay disciples was that a really virtuous person is vigilant and energetic and thus will become very rich. (*Diga N. Maha-parinibbana sutta.*)

At this point one might question: "Is poverty not a result of an unwholesome Kamma of a previous life?"

According to Buddhism, poverty may be a result of either a past or a present kamma, or both. But most such kammas can be suppressed and overcome by wise and far-seeing steps one takes in the present life.

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"Atthekaccani pap-kammani payoga-sampatti-patibalani" "There are certain unwholesome kammass which can be suppressed and overcome by means of wise and strong steps taken in this life" (*Mahaniddesa*). Most often it depends on the present situation that a past kamma good or bad rises up and finds opportunities to give its result. Therefore efforts made at present is the pre-eminent cause of a person's progress or failure in the case of the majority of people. "Utthatha ma pamadattha" Get up, loiter not is the Buddha's frequent advice to the world.

There are further sayings of the Buddha concerning wealth and other necessities of life.

"Dasa ime bhikkhave dhamma ittha kanta manapa lokasmim. Katame dasa? Bhoga bhikkave ittha kanta manapa dullabha lokasmim, vanno ittho kanto manapo dullabho lokasmim, arogyam ittham kantam manapam dullabham lokasmim, silani itthani kantani manapani dullabhani lokasmim, brahmacariyam ittham kantam manapam dullabham lokasmim, mittani itthani kantani manapani dullabhani lokasmim, bahusaccam ittham kantam manapam dullabham lokasmim, panna ittha kanta manapa dullabha lokasmim, dhammo ittho kanto manapo dullabho lokasmim, sagga ittha kanta manapa dullabha lokasmim" (Ang. v.p.135).

This means: Brethren, these ten things, desirable, pleasing and charming, are hard to achieve in the world. What are the ten? Wealth, brethren is desirable, pleasing and charming, but hard to achieve in the world. Beauty..., health..., virtue..., holy religious life..., truefriends..., erudition..., wisdom..., genuine Dhamma..., to be born in heaven..., each of these things is desirable, pleasing and charming, but hard to achieve."

"Imesam bhikkhave dasannam dhammanam dasa dhamma paripantha. Katame dasa? Alassam anutthanam bhoganam paripantho, amanadanam avibhusanam vannassa paripantho, asappaya-kiriya arogyassa paripantho, papamittata silanam paripantho, indriya-asamvarao brahmacariyassa paripantho, visamvadanam mittanam paripantho, asajjhaya kiriya bahusaccassa paripantho, asussusa aparipuccha pannaya paripantho,

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ananuyogo apaccavekkhana dhammassa paripantho, miccha-patipatti sagganam paripantho." (Ang. v. p.136)

This means, "Brethren, to these ten things desirable, pleasing and charming and hard to achieve in the world, ten things are obstacles. What ten? Laziness and lack of activity is the obstacle to wealth. Lack of finery and lack of adornment are obstacles to beauty. Following unhygienic ways is the obstacle to health. Association with persons of foul character is the obstacle to virtues. Unrestrained senses is the obstacle to life of holy celibacy. Deceiving is the obstacle to friends. Lack of recitation and re-reading is the obstacle to erudition. Not listening and not asking questions is the obstacle to wisdom. Lack of practice and contemplation is the obstacle to achievement of true dhamma. Getting on to evil ways is the obstacle to birth in heaven."

A person who expects to achieve success either in the worldly or in the religious life should avoid these obstacles and follow the way of growth and success as follows:

"Dasahi bhikkhave vaddhihi vaddamano ariya-savako ariyaya vaddhiya vaddhati saradaya ca hoti varadaya kayassa. Katamehi dasahi? Khetta-vatthuhi vaddhati, dana - dhannena vaddhati, putta-darehi vaddhati, dasa-kammakara-purisehi vaddahti catuppadehi vaddhati, saddhaya vaddhati, silena vaddhati, sutena vaddhati, cagena vaddhati, pannaya vaddhati." (Ang. v.136).

This means: "Brethren, by increasing in ten growths the aryan disciple (a noble lay follower of a Buddha) grows in the aryan growth, takes hold of the essential, takes hold of the best for his person. What ten? He grows in landed property, in wealth and granary, children and wife, in servants and workmen, in animal wealth (like cattle and sheep); he grows in faith, virtues, in erudition and in generosity and wisdom."

From these words of the Buddha, it is very clear that he valued the layman's growth in wealth, health and every aspect of family life as an

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aryan growth (a life valued by aryans, aryan here meaning the Buddhas and their arahant disciples.).

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CHAPTER FIVE

FAMILY LIFE

In the city of Savatthi there was a king who liked to be merry. He invented various new ways to be merry. Once he ordered his officials to gather many born-blind men. When they were brought before him, he ordered the royal elephant to be brought and made the blind men feel it. Each man felt different parts of the elephant and when the king ordered them to describe the animal, started describing the part each felt.

The man who felt the head said, "Your majesty, the elephant is like a large pot". But, the man who felt the ear disagreed. "No your majesty, it is like a large fan". Soon there was an uproar as each person disagreed with the others, believing in the part he felt. This quarrel was a novel source of amusement for the king.

Some critics of the Buddha and his teachings who have read very little of the teachings are like those blind men and describe the teachings as a pessimistic religion. Some others conclude that it is a religion only meant for monks who have left the household life and not for lay men. Another says that the Buddha teaches life in the world as a misery and it discourages and prevents progress of man.

The beings in the world according to Buddhism consists of all grades of mental development. Like lessons in a school, teachings are according to the level of development of the mind. If a man visiting a school observes the standard of lessons given to a higher class and comes to the conclusion that small children should not be sent to that school and the lessons are too deep for them, he is wrong. Similarly a man observing lessons given to the kindergarten decides that children expecting to study for higher examinations should not be sent to that school, that too is wrong. Therefore critics who have seen only one side of the teachings of the Buddha criticize it taunting that Buddhism is a teaching related to

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annihilation, or that it is a pessimistic teaching or that it does not help followers to live a successful householder's life .

The Buddha is described in many a place in the Buddhist Scriptures as a teacher whose teachings were, Caritanukula Desana. This means he taught beings in a way suitable to the temperament of the learner. If a person wanted to be a rich and successful person in the present life, the Buddha taught him the way to earn wealth and be successful by right means. If his aspirations were to learn to live a successful married life, the Buddha taught him how to choose a suitable partner and live a righteous life. If a man tired of life and has given up all hopes came to him, the Buddha taught him and encouraged him to see further and make him hopeful and develop his spiritual life successfully.

In this chapter I am dealing with the teachings of the Buddha regarding household or married life.

In the city of Saketha lived a couple known as Nakula-pita and Nakula-mata, called in that name because their son Nakula was a well known person in the city. They were very devoted followers of the Buddha and even considered him as their son. Once the Buddha visited them. After he was seated and served with food, they sat down besides the Buddha and started a conversation. Nakula-pita praising his wife said, "Lord, ever since Nakula-mata my wife came to my house when she was a young girl, I have not been conscious of having transgressed against her even in thought, much less in person. Our desire is to see and live with each other not only in this life but also in the lives to come". His wife also said, "Lord, ever since I as a mere girl came to this household when Nakula-pita was a mere lad, I have never transgressed against him even in thought. We want to see and live with each other in the life to come".

In reply the Buddha said, "If a husband and wife desire to see and live with each other in this life and in the life to come, both should cultivate and match four qualities: faith, good conduct, generosity and the knowledge of Dhamma." (*Gradual sayings p 70*)

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One day a lay follower called Dhammika questioned the Buddha how a householder should live his life and the reply he received was, that he should keep the five precepts (not killing, not stealing, not lying, not participating in sexual misconduct and not indulging in intoxicants). This account is given in the Dhammika Sutta of Sutta Nipatha.

In making the household life happy both husband and wife must fulfil their duties to each other equally. In his advice to Sigalaka, the Buddha said, a husband should perform his duties in five ways: by respecting her, in courteous behaviour, by faithfulness, handing over the authority of the house to her and providing her with all her needs such as clothes and ornaments. Thus ministered, the wife should fulfil her duties with love, faithfulness, hospitality to relations of both sides, protecting the wealth he earns and performance of her duties with skill and care.

The advice given by the Buddha regarding selecting a partner is illustrated in the following story. When ever he resided in Savatthi, the Buddha was frequently invited to the residence of Anathapindika, the rich banker who was famous for his generosity. Once when he was in this residence the Buddha overheard a noise of scolding and shouting from an inner courtyard. The Buddha inquired as to the disturbance and was replied by Anathapindika, that it was due to the proud and hot-tempered daughter-in-law quarrelling with the servants. "And ever since she came to this house our peace has been disturbed, as she is almost always quarrelling and shouting with some one" said the banker.

The Buddha requested Anathapindika to bring his daughter-in-law to him. When she came, bowed and sat down, he inquired, "Is it you that was shouting over there?". When she owned to it, he asked, "Do you know that there are seven kinds of wives". She replied that she did not know. Then the Buddha went on to expound the seven kinds of wives.

"The first kind of wife who is hard hearted, hating her husband loves other men and wastes her husband's wealth is called, wife the destroyer.

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"The next kind of wife who likes to filch a little out of her husband's wealth or earnings is called the thievish wife.

"Yet another kind of wife is greedy, passionate, lazy, careless in her duties, foul-mouthed, full of wrath and hate and tyrannical to the members of her husband's family. She is called the tyrannical wife.

"Some wives are compassionate, cares for her husband as a mother to her child, protects his property from waste and loss. This kind of wife is called the motherly wife.

"the fifth kind is modest, obedient, reveres the husband as a younger sister and pays respect to him. This kind is called the sisterly wife.

"The next kind of wife is very pleased at the sight of her husband, as a friend is happy at the sight of a person after a long absence. She is high bred, virtuous; and always ready to sacrifice even her life to save him. This kind is called the friendly wife.

"the last is a very calm wife, even keeping silent when abused by the husband. She is full of dogged patience, true hearted, bending to her husband's will and never shows a rough face at any time. She loves her husband as an obedient servant loves his master. Such a wife is called the servant-like wife.

"Of these seven kinds the first three , namely the wife destroyer, the thievish wife and the tyrannical wife make the family unhappy and they also become miserable here and hereafter.

"The other four kind; the motherly wife, sisterly wife, the friendly wife and the servant-like wife, make families happy and fortunate. Here and hereafter they will be happy and become successful in every aspect."

After explaining the seven kinds of wives, the Buddha questioned the young woman as to what category she belonged to. She promised to

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behave to her husband and his family as a motherly wife, as a sisterly wife and as a servant-like wife. Thus peace and happiness was brought to the household of Anathapindika.

These are only a few of the teachings of the Buddha for the blessing of peace and fortune and happiness of married life. I would like to end this chapter with his classification of married couples into four classes.

"There are four kinds of couples living as husband and wife. What four? A female ghoulish lives with a male ghoulish, a female ghoulish lives with a male angel, a female angel lives with a male ghoulish and a female angel lives with a male angel.

"In what way does a male ghoulish lives with a female ghoulish? In this case the husband is a slayer of life,steals, commits adultery, is a liar and given to indulgence in intoxicants. Such a wicked man lives with a wife of the same type. This kind of life is called the life lived together by a couple of ghoulish.

"How does a male ghoulish live together with a female angel? If the husband lives an immoral life together with a kind and good natured wife, it is called a life being lived together by a male ghoulish with a female angel.

"In what way does a male angel live with a female ghoulish? The husband is good natured and virtuous while the wife is wicked and immoral. This is called the life lived by a male angel and a female ghoulish.

"These three kinds of couples live an unhappy and unsuccessful life.

"If both the husband and the wife are good natured, kind and virtuous and live their life loving each other, it is called the life of an angel couple."

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The Buddha advised every husband and wife to live as an angelic couple. That is the family life to be lived by a Buddhist couple. This family life is the ideal one which invites peace and success here and hereafter.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DEFILEMENTS OF MIND

There are three stages of defilements of mind. By defilements we mean the unwholesome states of mind such as lust, anger and so on. We know from experience that those mental defilements are not always manifest in our heart. But the potentiality for them to arise at any time is present within us. This state of potentiality is the first stage or dormant stage of defilement. Suppose a person comes in front of you and starts abusing you and calling names. Certainly you will get shocked and then angry. Even though you may keep silent and passive, there might be anger risen within you. This is the second stage, the stage of uprisen defilement. At times you might become so angry, that you cannot control yourself and you would translate it into action by scolding back or even assaulting him. This is the third stage, the worst, at which you translate your defilement into action. It is when the mental defilements surge up to the third stage that a man would commit crimes of various sorts.

The purpose of following the path pointed out by the Buddha is to curb and dispel these defilements and to purge one's mind of all those unwholesome characteristics.

The process of self purification is not easy. The dormant stage of defilements is not easy to handle at the very start as it is subtle. The stage of manifestation of passions in the heart, though not so subtle as the first stage, is too, not easy to handle as it works only within the heart. The third stage of defilement, at which one commits evil deeds is evident to everybody, and it is at this stage one should start the process of self purification. In every situation we should proceed guided by proper understanding and being ever mindful. We have to use our reasoning to understand the contemptibility and evil effects of doing wrong deeds, and decide to abstain from committing them. By following this method we will

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be able to control our mind and curb out temper so far that we may not transgress the code of morality.

Though we refrain from committing any bad deeds , following this method, defilements might still rise now and then within us whenever our mind is disturbed by some external object. By abstaining from wrong speech and deed we bring defilements under a certain amount of control and check the third stage. But those defilements may still develop up to the second stage, the stage of arisen defilements. If we are not vigilant enough they may develop into the third stage. Therefore we should now try to prevent those defilements from rising up in the heart. For this we should try to investigate and find out the causes for the origin of defilements. The main cause of the rise of mental defilements is the mind pursuing some mental object vigorously and allowing the dormant passions an opportunity to rise up. Thus the solution is not to allow the mind to stray carelessly. To develop this ability we have to develop right concentration. For this purpose we have to fix our mind on some ideal or good object which keeps it from straying. According to Buddhist scriptures there are forty objects out of which one is to be selected suitable to one's temperament. The concentration is developed by fixing the mind on this object.

On continuation of this practice, all passions remain inhibited and find no opportunity to arise. They remain in their dormant or potential stage. If we neglect or stop our practice of concentration, again our mind might stray and passions would find an opportunity to arise. So we have to deal with this potential stage of defilements now. The cause of the potentiality for rise of passions is our ignorance or nescience of the exact nature of life. This lack of knowledge as to what we really are is called Avijja in Pali. We have to use the faculty of investigation at this stage to pierce this mist of delusion, Avijja.

In this third stage of practice, we should try to examine what the so called 'man' or 'living being' is. Each one of us consist of a body and a mind. First investigate the body. Then we perceive that our body is nothing but a mass of matter, which is subject to constant change, growth

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and decay. Once we were infants. Then we grew up to be adults. We do not see actually when we grew up to be adults as the change was happening always. As we grow older similarly the process of decay goes on incessantly. Thus it is clear that our body is subject to change from moment to moment.

Also on analysis we find our body is a mass of ever changing molecules. Search further into the molecules and atoms and we notice that it is but a volume of vibrations. So there is no where in our body an unchanging entity, a substance, a self or soul to be owned as 'I' or 'mine'. This is the right understanding of our body.

Next we should come to our mind. If we carefully examine our mind we see mind-units, together with allied mental characteristics rise and vanish. With every vanishing mind-unit, another mental state arises leaving no gap. When we go deep into this process we come to the conclusion that what we call the mind is not any substance or a permanent thing, but a process of thinking changing faster than the matter of the body. Thus there is nothing to be taken as an ego entity in the mind.

When we come to the right understanding so that no doubt remains as to the nature of our body and mind, the witching darkness of Avijja or nescience will pass away and will never be able to enshroud our minds again. This right understanding comes in four stages. They are Sotapatti (Stream entrance), Sakadagami (Once-returner stage), Anagami (Non returner stage) and Arahatta (Perfection). In these four stages the factors of the path like right understanding unitedly perform their functions for realization of the four great truths. The consummation of their functions is at Arahantship (Perfection).

In this procedure the third or violent stage of mental defilements is controlled by the practice of good conduct or keeping the precepts (Seela). The second stage of risen mental defilements is controlled by practising right concentration (Samadhi). The first or dormant stage of defilements is overcome by self analysis and investigation (Panna -or perfect understanding.).

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Thus the path of Buddhism, consisting of Seela, Samadhi and Panna, removes and destroys all mental defilements or passions by degrees and makes the follower of the path entirely pure and perfect, and frees him from turmoil and suffering.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TWO MODES OF SPEECH

In ordinary speech we make statements such as "sun set", "sun rise" and the like. But actually there is no such thing as rising or setting of the sun. They are phenomena brought about by the rotation of the earth on its own axis. We make such statements not to mislead our hearers but to follow and comply with the usage of speech accepted by the people.

Suppose a teacher explains the very same phenomena to his students in his classroom. There he may explain to them how the earth rotates on its own axis, and how consequently the phenomena such as night, noon, sun-set, sun rise etc. come to pass. Yet the very same teacher at other times seems to use such expressions as sun-set and the like.

Thus it is clear that there are two modes of speech, namely the expression according to what really happens and that how a happening appears to us. The former is called the absolute truth and the latter is called conventional truth.

In the fifth discourse of the third chapter of Ekaka -nipatha of Anguttaragama there is reference to the types of discourses of the Buddha. These are classified as Nitattha - suttanta and Neyyattha-suttanta. Nitattha-suttanta means, according to the commentary, the teaching which is with the primarily inferred sense, and Neyyattha-suttanta means the teachings to which the primary sense is to be inferred. The former was later known as Paramatta desana, the teaching of truth in the ultimate sense, and the latter as Sammuti-desana, the teachings in the mode of the language generally or universally accepted by the people. For the latter the Buddha said, "They are expressions, terms of speech, designations in common use in the world" (*Dialogues of the Buddha 1 p.202*).

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"Man", "woman", "table", "tree", "river", "mountain" and the like are words used to express a definite idea. They are used for the sake of convenience and for conventional purposes, but the convention or conception is subject to change. For instance, at one stage of man's growth we call him an infant, some years later when he is about twenty years old we call him a youth, still later a middle-aged man and at last an old man after the change of his physique.

What we call a man in the ultimate point of view is only a psycho-physical process, and there is no self identical entity, a thing that persists without any change. This idea can be explained using the term box. What is a box? Some pieces of timber are prepared, and arranged and put together in a particular way to give a certain shape or form, and then it is called a box. Suppose the box is disjointed and the parts are assembled together to give them the appearance of a bench. We cannot call it a box any longer. The parts remain the same, but with the change of form or shape, the name also changed. If now someone who knew the parts formed a box earlier called it a box, then others will accuse him of uttering falsehood. Therefore if we go against the convention of the people, it would be tantamount to telling lies.

Now with reference to the shape we call it a box, how did the shape come about and where is it conceived? First the carpenter thinks out the shape or forms the picture in his mind and then draws it on a piece of paper, in the form of a plan or a design, and according to this plan he arranges and fastens the pieces of timber together and calls it a box. The pieces of timber are not the box. The very same pieces of timber arranged to give the form of a bench results in these pieces being called a bench. Thus in the ultimate sense the imagined box-shape is but a concept. Similarly, bench, chair, house, man, dog, mountain sea, and all such things and also beings are but concepts and hence there is no special substance that is called bench and so on in the ultimate sense.

Then what are they from the ultimate point of view?

Let us examine one of these objects like the box. When we analyse it deeper and deeper, we will come to the conclusion that it is a combination of atoms. From the Buddhist point of view every atom is a compound of still smaller particles of matter and every smallest particle of matter has four Maha-bhutas or primary qualities, namely hardness or Pathavi-dhatu, cohesion or Apo-dhatu, energy in the form of heat, cold etc. or Tejo-dhatu and vibration or Vayo-dhatu. All units of matter are dynamic, and are in a state of constant motion. These qualities known as Maha-bhutas are universally present in all material things.

Thus, after all, from the ultimate point of view, a box is a compound or combination of units of matter, a collection of ever changing material states.

What is man according to the ultimate truth? In the first analysis, he is a compound of mind and body - Nama and Rupa. When we analyse the body and examine it deeper, we come to the conclusion that it is an assemblage or combination of material parts, and that every such part is composed of a vast number of atomic units, having the primary qualities of matter, which are subject to constant motion. In other words, a mass of changing states, a mass of waves and vibrations in which there is no substance, nothing stable, nothing static in its own nature.

Next let us examine the other constituent of the so called man, the mind. It is also a flux of waves similar to the body, but these mind waves flow much more rapidly than the body states. The nature of mind, the psychic side of man, resembles the nature of a flame to some extent. A flame is a mere continuity of flickering moments, rising and falling on what it feeds during its continual flux. It is never the same for two consecutive moments, even so is the nature of the mind. The mind is but a stream of consciousness, an unending stream of thought moments which rise and fall successively. Hence, there is nothing permanent in this psychic process and the only constancy about it is, its incessant change.

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Thus from the ultimate or absolute point of view, every animate thing, every man, every animal is but a stream of mental and physical states. A man who does not see this rapidly changing nature of mind - matter process mistakes the whole or a part of this process for an identity and imagines that there is an abiding ego-entity. Every animate being, which has a mind and a body is an absolute combination of these two interdependent streams, one physical and the other psychical - each undergoing momentary change. Thus what man, in the ultimate sense is, a psycho-physical process in which there is not a single unchanging substance. All inanimate things such as stones, earth, fire, water, rays, air and the like are but various kinds of flow of the aggregates of the fundamental elements with primary qualities.

As explained above, according to the Buddhist philosophy, a man is an interdependent flow of consciousness, mental characteristics and material states co-operatively combined. If anybody takes any part either of body or of mind as permanent or as an ego-entity, or distorts mind as matter or matter as mind, or any of their constituents as an ego, a self or soul, he is regarded as one holding an erroneous view.

The Buddha, when instructing people, used both these ways of expression, the way of commonly accepted expression and the way of direct expression of ultimate truth, suiting the purpose.

Now, I have so far explained the difference between the two kinds of truths, Sammuti-sacca, the truth according to common usage and the Paramatta-sacca, the ultimate truth. Paramttha-sacca or the ultimate truth also is divided into two categories. They are Sabhava-siddha-paramatta and Ariya-sacca-paramatta.

Sabhava-siddha-paramatta means self evident truth, according to our every day experience. Ariya-sacca-paramatta means the four noble truths. The difference can be explained using an example. According to the Sabhava-siddha-paramatta, feelings can be of three kinds: Sukha-vedana, happy or pleasant feelings, dukkha-vedana, unhappier unpleasant feelings and apache-vedana or neutral feelings. But from the ariya-sacca-paramatta

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point of view, all these are categorised in one group called dukkha, suffering or unsatisfactory quality of feelings.

Let us consider another example, the wholesome deeds or lokiiya kusalas, the morally good kammās which are the causes of birth in happy abodes. Good kammās belonging to sensuous realm or Kāma-loka causes the rebirth in a happy abode in the same realm (Kāma-sugathi), rūpavācāra-kusala the developed rūpajhāna causes rebirth in subtle material realm called Rūpa-bhava, and arūpa-jhāna-kusala causes the rebirth in non-material realms or Arūpa-bhava. These three kinds of good kammās are casteless or wholesome deeds causing happiness according to the Sabhava-sacca-paramatta. But according to the Ariya-sacca-paramatta, all these three realms of existence are Dukkha, suffering or unsatisfactory states as they are not permanent, and therefore the wholesome deeds or casteless are the cause for those unsatisfactory states. Thus those deeds are no more wholesome from the Ariya-sacca-paramatta point of view. Therefore, lokiya-casteless, either kamavācāra, rūpavācāra or arupavācāra are included in Samkharas and Kammabhava which cause the continuity of Samsara (the cycle of continuing rebirths) and are factors of Anuloma-paticcasamuppāda.

Thus it can be said that Sabhava-siddha-paramatta wanes and loses its brilliance before the Ariya-sacca-paramatta. The four noble truths, the Ariya-sacca-paramatta are the only ultimate truths, perfect in all aspects.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FOUR KINDS OF PERSONS

In a pond there are four kinds of lotus buds, some risen above the water awaiting the first rays of the sun to bloom, some although out of water needing one or more days to bloom, yet another reaching the surface and needing longer time to develop before blooming and most young buds thriving under the surface and growing but may be destroyed by water animals before reaching the surface.

There are four kinds of persons in the world, the Buddha has named as Ugghatitannu, Vipancitannu, Neyya and Padaperuma. The first the Ugghatitannu are the people with well developed acute faculties who are able to realize the truths immediately when they listen to a short exposition of a Buddha or an Arahant. They are very quick to realize the truth. An example is the first disciple of the Buddha, the elder Kondanna. Such persons formed the first grade of disciples of the Buddha. They are compared to the fully grown buds of lotus waiting the first rays of the sun to bloom.

Some persons are not able to realize the truth immediately at the first hearing of a short discourse, and require some explanation to some extent. When they listen to a detailed exposition of Truths they would realize the truths and are compared to the lotus buds that bloom after exposure to the sun rays for a day or two. They are called Vipancitannu which means 'little delayed' or 'after a short description'. The princes of Bhaddavaggiya clan may be sited as examples. Those princes numbering thirty from Magadha went on a pleasure trip to a park. Twenty-nine were married and were accompanied by their wives. The thirtieth prince escorted a courtesan, who finding a chance, stole some of their valuable jewellery and disappeared. The princes and their wives searching for the courtesan met the Buddha sitting under a tree by the roadside.

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When they saw the Buddha, they went to him and inquired whether he saw the courtesan stealing away. Thereupon, the Buddha said, "Which is more important ? to make a search for oneself or the others"

They agreed that it is more important to make a search for oneself. The Buddha inquired whether they knew how to search for oneself. The princes replied in the negative and requested the Buddha to show the way. They sat down, abandoning the fruitless search, and the Buddha explained the nature of life in some detail, and the princes realized the truth and became disciples.

The third category called Neyya have been named thus, since they have to be coached or guided, or to be trained for some time, for realization of the truth. Some of these need to be guided in the practice of virtues and keeping the moral code, some need to be guided in their concentration or Samatha meditation and some in insight or Vipassana meditation before they can realize the truth.

Padaperuma or the fourth class of persons are those who are not sufficiently matured in their spiritual development to realize the truth in the very same life. They have to practise the moral code for many lives before they are developed enough for realization of the truth by guidance from a Buddha or an arahant. Meanwhile if they go along a wrong path due to the influence of bad association and the like, they will have to suffer very long, may be even millions of rounds of rebirths before they can develop themselves to a category that would realize the truth. Thus they are in an uncertain situation like the young lotus buds under the water, in danger of being eaten or destroyed by water animals. The majority of the people in this world belong to this class. If they understand the uncertainty of their situation and live a pure, virtuous life according to Dhamma, with strong determination and firm aspiration, they may realize the truth at the feet of the coming Buddha Maitreya, even if they could not attain it during the period in which the teachings of the Gautama Buddha continues to exist.

CHAPTER NINE

DEVELOPMENT OF DIVINE STATES

There are many methods of practising meditation or Bhavana. Each method suits different beings of different temperament. Out of these methods the practice and development of the four divine states of loving kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), gladness or sympathetic joy (muditha) and equanimity (apacha) is very important and most useful both to those who have renounced the family life as well as to those who live a family life.

In Pali these states are called "Brahma Vihara". "Brahma" means, according to Buddhist terminology, the higher or sublime gods (a kind of beings in the universe) who live a life of loving-kindness etc. Hence practice of these virtues is considered a godly way of life, or divine states, in other words. They are also called "Appamanna" or immeasurable mental states, because these states of mind are to be projected and extended towards all living beings immeasurably and limitlessly.

The persons who practise these meditations regularly as a part of their daily life, even though they have not yet attained to any jhana (ecstatic states), will be able to experience amazing results.

I will describe an event as an illustration of some of the powers and results of loving-kindness meditation. Over a half century ago, during the first world war, there was a Sri Lankan living in Calcutta, devoting his life to propagation of Buddhism in that city. During this time, in Sri Lanka a power struggle arose between the Sinhalese and the Muslim communities. The British governor ruling the country at that time arrested many Sinhalese leaders of the day. Although the Sri Lankan mentioned in this story, living in Calcutta did not have any involvement with the conflict at home, a cable message was sent by the chief of Police in Sri Lanka, to

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the Chief of Police in Calcutta to arrest him and deport him to Sri Lanka. A message explaining the order was sent to the Srilankan by the Chief of Police with news that the chief would visit him with the intention of deporting him.

The Srilankan became apprehensive as declaration of martial law with its summary punitive actions taken on suspicion was well known. As the only way to get out of the predicament, he decided to extend loving-kindness to the chief of Police of Calcutta. Placing a picture of the Police chief on a table in front of him, he started meditating loving-kindness in the following manner. He concentrated his thoughts on the picture and imagined the form of the Police chief and began to extend his feelings of loving-kindness towards him with the words, "Mr. so and so, may you be happy, may you be contented". Starting at about nine p.m. in the evening he practised this meditation throughout the whole night. Early in the morning, the chief of Police came with the intention of arresting the Srilankan and escorting him to be deported to Sri Lanka.

But as soon as the Chief of Police of Calcutta saw the hero of our story, he changed his mind. The Police chief said, "Mr. so and so, I feel amazed at the change that has overcome me. Though I came with the decision to arrest you and deport you to Srilanka, When I see you, I feel as you are my father. Therefore I cannot implement the decision. Instead I'll keep you under house arrest and take the responsibility for you. You must not do anything to break my faith in your good behaviour."

The Sri Lankan in the story is a good friend of the author and related the story on his return to Sri Lanka later.

If a person extends his loving-kindness, at a regular hour every day for at least a month, to a person who is angry with him, with a pure heart, the unfriendly person will become friendly, although incredible it may seem.

This is one of the amazing results of extending loving-kindness towards a single person. If one practises this meditation universally with

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an unselfish heart, there is no question about the results that would be shown. If all people in all countries honestly practised the development of the four divine states, according to the instructions given in this essay, no weapons would be needed to save the mankind from the disaster of wars, and peace would reign over the whole earth, with the real heavenly kingdom manifested here on earth.

In this essay, I will first set forth the general advice of the Buddha to all disciples, then the nature of anger, as the Buddha expounded it, the value of expelling it, the obstacles to such practice and finally how overcoming the obstacles, one should develop the four divine states step by step until one attains to the highest level of the practice. The descriptions and methods given here are based on Pali texts, commentaries, the Visuddhimagga and its translation Path of Purification (by the late Venerable Nyanamoli Maha Thera)

FOUNDATION OF THE PRACTICE

A person who expects to be successful in his practice of meditation (bhavana) should follow the instructions as given by the Buddha, for he said:

You must train thus for yourselves:

Others may be harmful, but we should be harmless.

Others may kill, but we should abstain from killing.

Others may steal, but we should abstain from stealth and robbery.

Others may be unchaste but we should be chaste.

Others may lie, but we should be truthful.

Others may use harsh speech, but we should abstain from harsh speech.

Others may slander but we must not.

Others may gossip, but we should not.

Others may be covetous, but we should not be.

Others may be corrupt in heart, but we should not be.

Others may entertain wrong views, but we must harbour right views.

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Others may have wrong thoughts, but we must have right thoughts.

Others may use wrong speech, but we must use right speech.

Others may do wrong acts, but we must do right acts only.

Others may practise a wrong livelihood, but we must practise a right livelihood.

Others may be of wrong endeavour, but we must be of right endeavour.

Others may be of wrong mindfulness, but we must be of right mindfulness.

Others may have wrong concentration of mind, but we must cultivate only right concentration.

Others may look for wrong freedom, but we must aim only at right freedom.

Others may be full of sloth and torpor, but we must be active and energetic.

Others may be full of pride, but we should not be proud.

Others may have doubts, but we must dispel our doubts.

Others may be wrathful, but we should free ourselves from wrath.

Others may be full of rancour, but we must get rid of rancour.

Others may be harsh in their behaviour, but we must not be.

Others may be spiteful, but we must not be.

Others may be jealous, but we must not be.

Others may grudge, but we must not.

Others may be treacherous, but we must not be.

Others may be dishonest, but we must not be.

Others may be stubborn, but we must not be.

Others may be difficult to approach, but we must not be.

Others may cultivate bad friends, but we must not.

Others may be indolent, but we must not be.

Others may be lacking in self confidence, but we should be self confident.

Others may be shameless, but we should not be.

Others may be reckless, but we should be cautious.

Others may be illiterate, but we must be literate.

Others may be poor in wisdom, but we must be rich in wisdom.

Others may harbour bias, and may find it difficult to give up their prejudices, but we should be free of bias and easily welcome the truth.

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"I tell you further, that even the intention of doing good is helpful and invites good results, let alone the practice of good speech and deeds. If there is an uneven road, I tell you there should be an equally even road, if there is an uneven ford there should be an even ford. (*Majjhima Nikaya* 443, 44.)

ANGER

Anger that arises in man's heart manifests itself in diverse phases as ill will, hatred, wrath, rancour, enmity, etc. To purify one's heart of those unwholesome characteristics of the mind, one should understand how harmful they are to oneself and how they stand in the way of one's spiritual progress.

This is how the Buddha speaks on this subject:

"The person possessed of anger turns discoloured,
He does not have good sound sleep,
Coming upon beneficial things,
He mistakes them as mischance.

Then doing some harm to another
By speech and deed (and being fined by the king)
He will have to suffer loss of property.

Crazed by wrath does he behave in a way
That invites him ill repute,
His relatives and friends
Shun him as he is hot-tempered.

Anger fathers misfortune,
Anger maddens one's brain
It is the danger born within,
Though the man realizes it not.

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The angry one knows not what is right,
Nor does he see what really is,
All around him is darkness for him,
Whom does the anger subjugate?

Captivated by anger does he
As a hard thing easily done by him.
But when his anger is gone,
Repenteth he as one burnt by fire"
(Anguttara Nikaya, iv.p.94)

"Maddened by anger , he(he) kills his (her) father;
Maddened by anger , he (she) slays his(her) own mother;
Maddened by anger, he (she) kills a holy person;
Maddened by anger, slayeth he(he) any poor worldling"
(Anguttara Nikaya, iv,p. 97)

"All beings seek their own good,
None dearer to them than themselves.
Yet crazed by anger and maddened by some reason,
They kill themselves; some commit suicide with a sword.
Some swallow poison,
Still another hangs himself by a rope,
Or flings himself over a precipice or a crevice."
(Anguttara Nikaya,iv, p. 97)

"Doing destruction of life,
The angry one sees no harm done to himself(herself),
Due to ignorance,
By such ways".
(Anguttara Nikaya, iv, p.98)

"The person who is angry with another wishes for him(her): Let him be ugly. Why is that? Because the angry person does not like to see the other in a beautiful light. Even though the other is well bathed, well dressed, the angry person sees in him (her) an ugliness.

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The angry person does not like to see the other person lying in comfort, because he wishes the latter to lie always in discomfort.

The angry person does not like to see the other person in prosperity, because he always expects the latter to be in deprivation.

The angry one cannot bear the other one's fame, because he always wishes the latter to be under shame.

The angry one does not like the other one to have friends and companions, because he wishes the other one to be deserted by everybody.

The angry one does not like the other one to be destined to a happy rebirth after death, because he wishes the latter to be reborn in a miserable state after death." (*Anguttara Nikaya IV, p.94*)

"A person who is wrathful, who cherishes hatred for another, who is wicked and dishonest, who holds erroneous views; who is a cheat, let one know a person of this type as one of the lowest grade among humans". (*Sutta Nipata, verse 116*)

"The person crazed by anger, subjugated by anger, with his heart captivated by anger, ponders over his own disaster, disaster of others and disasters of them both" (*Anguttara Nikaya I, p.216*)

"A log, Monks, taken away from a funeral pyre, which is ablaze on both ends and fouled in the middle with excrement, serves for timber neither in the city nor in the village. Similar is the person who is wrathful and works neither for his own good nor for the good of the others." (*Anguttara Nikaya II, p.95*)

REMOVAL OF ANGER

"He abused me, he maltreated me,
He defeated me or he robbed me.
Harbouring such thoughts keeps hatred alive.
(*Dhammapada, verse 4*)

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"He abused me, he maltreated me,
He defeated me or he robbed me,
Releasing such thoughts banishes hatred for all time."
(Dhammapada, verse 4)

"Repay not the angry with anger
And you will win the battle hard to win.
He who, knowing the other in anger,
Maintains peace mindfully,
Works for the well-being of both of them,
Well-being of his own, and that of other "
(Samyutta Nikaya, I, p. 162)

"Brethren, suppose some bandits come to you with a double-handled saw and sever your body, limb from limb, yet even on that occasion, if anyone of you would turn his feelings against them, for that reason he is not a follower of my teaching. Even on that occasion, you should train yourself to guard yourself from ill will thus: May our hearts be not perverted, may we not utter any harsh words against them, but may we dwell kindly and compassionate, with tender heart of good will, void of anger." *(Majjhima Nikaya I, p.129)*

"Everybody loves himself (herself)
To everybody his(her) life is dear,
Considering this fact, one should abstain
From harming another."
(Udana, p. 47)

"Force of patience is the most powerful army."
(Dhammapada verse 399)

"I visited all quarters with my mind,
And did not see anybody dearer to him than himself.
Self is the dearest of all things to everyone.

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One who considers this fact and loves oneself
Would never harm another being." (*Udana p.47*)

"Enmity is never appeased by returning enmity.
Enmity is appeased only by amity.
This is the eternal truth."
(*Dhammapada* , verse 5)

"None of the good deeds done by one for acquiring merit is worth
a fraction of the value of the practice of the meditation of loving-kindness"
(*Itivuttaka*, p.6)

"Conquer enmity with amity,
Conquer evil with good,
Conquer stinginess with generosity,
Conquer falsehood with truthfulness."
(*Dhammapada*, verse 222)

"Truly we dwell in happiness,
As we do not hate while others hate,
Amidst those who hate
Free of hate do we live."
(*Dhammapada*, verse 197)

"Brethren, eleven advantages¹ are to be expected from the freedom of heart (from ill will) through the cultivation of loving-kindness, development of good will, by constant increase of loving thoughts, by taking it for one's vehicle, by making it as if treasured, by living in conformity with it, by translating kindness into action, by establishing oneself in loving kindness.

¹ These advantages are completely obtained by a person who has attained to ecstatic trances (*appanajhana*) by the development of loving-kindness. Persons who have not progressed so far may obtain some of the benefits occasionally.

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humans, he (she) becomes dear to non humans, gods would protect him(her), fire or poison or weapons cannot affect him (her), his (her) mind is quickly concentrated on the object (of meditation), his (her) complexion quickly turns attractive, he (she) passes away (at the moment of death) in calm. If he (she) fails to attain Perfection in this life, he (she) will be reborn into the abode of sublime (Brahma) gods."

(Anguttara Nikaya, v, p. 342)

"If a monk cultivates loving-kindness even as long as the time taken to snap the fingers, it is said that he lives not destitute of jhana(ecstasy), becomes one who follows the Master's instructions, one who keeps to the advice of the Master, and it is not in vain that he accepts food offered by the people. So what a greatly valuable thing it would be if one would make much of it! " *(Anguttara Nikaya I, p.II)*

Comparing others with one-self, and seeing that all seek happiness, one should extend loving-kindness to all beings as follows:

May I be happy and free of worries,
May my friends and relatives, those who are indifferent to me, and also those who hate me - may all these be happy,
May all beings in limitless world systems be happy.
May, in the same way, all women, all men, all holy beings, all worldlings, all deities, all those in unhappy realms, in all the directions, be happy."
(Samanera -sikkha)

DISCOURSE ON LOVING-KINDNESS

"One who is skilled in one's own good, who seeks highest good
Should follow the way as given below:
One should be active, upright, perfectly upright, docile,
gentle and humble.

One should be contented, easily supported,
Having few wants, simple in living.

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One should be contented, easily supported,
Having few wants, simple in living.

With senses composed, discreet,
Not arrogant, void of greedy attachment
To supporting families.

One should not do any mean deed,
A target of the reproof of the wise,
One should extend loving thoughts
To all others thus :
May all beings be happy and safe,
May all beings be happy-hearted,

May all beings , both weak and strong,
With no exception whatever,
Whether long or stout,
Middling or short, minute or gross

Seen or unseen, living afar or living near,
Already born or seeking rebirth,
May all these beings be happy hearted.

May no one deceive another
Nor scorn in any way, wherever he(she) may be,
Nor in anger or ill-will,
May one not desire another's mishap.

Just as a mother protects her child,
Her only child (with so deep a love)
Even as to risk her own life for its sake,
Even so towards all living beings,
May one cultivate boundless loving thought.

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One should cultivate a heart of good will,
Towards the whole world, free of hate and enmity,
Up above, down below, and across ,unhindered

Standing, walking, sitting or lying down
So long as one keeps awake,
Should one devote oneself
To the practice of this meditation.

The virtuous one, with no falling into error,
Endowed with Perfect view,
Should dispel greed for pleasures,
For, never will such a one return to a mother's womb"
(Sutta Nipata, Metta Sutta)

"There are nine bases of quarrelling: quarrelling is stirred up at the thought, he has done me a harm, or he is doing me a harm, or he will do me a harm, or he has done, is doing, will do a harm to one I love, or he has bestowed a benefit, is bestowing, will bestow a benefit, on one I dislike" *(Dialogues of Buddha, III, P.243)*

EXPULSION OF ANGER

"There are five ways whereby resentment arisen in a monk can be dispelled. What are the five?

When resentment arises in one's heart against another, good will is to be extended towards that person. Thus the resentment for that person is to be dispelled.

Or compassion is to be extended towards that person;
Or sympathetic joy is to be extended towards that person;
Or equanimity is to be extended towards that person;
Or that person is to be entirely forgotten, is not to be thought of;

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Or the law of kamma as one's own property is to be attributed to him, as - this gentleman has his own kamma for his property, kamma as his heritage, kamma for his producer, kamma for his relative, and kamma for his refuge, he will have to accept for his heritage whatever kamma he does here Thus the resentment for another is to be dispelled."

(Anguttara Nikaya, Book V, p.161)

OBSTACLES TO PRACTICE

When one practises any of these four meditations (bhavana), there may arise obstacles that hinder further development. Sometimes one may remember some harm done to oneself by another person. On such occasion he should remember the instructions given by the Buddha and other Arahants. The examples they have shown from their lives are to be followed on such occasions. Read the instructions and advice given in the foregoing introduction.

He should even advise himself thus :

"Being angry you are harming yourself. The kamma rooted in your anger is conducive to your own disaster. Your kamma is your own property, you are the heir of your own kamma. Your kamma is your own parent, your own kin, and your own refuge. Whatever you do, you yourself will be its heir. This kamma you are going to do is not conducive to your achievement of perfect Buddhahood, Silent Buddhahood (Pacceka Buddha) or Arhantship. It will not bring you overlordship either in the highest heaven or lower heaven or in this world of humans. Nor will it bring any happiness. The evil kamma rooted in your anger will lead you after death to misery in unhappy states. By being angry you become like the man who in order to attack an enemy picked up a burning ember, thus burning himself, or a man who picked up dung to attack another and made himself stink."

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If he is still displeased with the other person, he should reflect how our Buddha behaved towards his enemies even in his previous births. A good example is the life of ascetic Khantivadi.

When he was an ascetic known as Khantivadi, long ago, he was living in a grove in the city of Benares. The king of Benares a man of cruel nature and fond of materialistic views met him and inquired what kind of doctrine he taught. The ascetic replied that he taught the value of patience and kindness. The king scornful of the doctrine, had him flogged for no reason, to prove that it is impossible to practise patience and loving-kindness. Not able to make the ascetic angry, the king even amputated his hands and feet. Even at this the ascetic felt not the slightest anger or ill-will towards the king up to his death. *(Jataka III, 39)*

In another previous life, the Buddha had been born as a son to an arrogant king named Pratapa. The infant was a prodigy. One day the king entered the harem and noticed that the queen who was fondling the baby son did not get up from her seat. This angered him and he ordered the executioners to lop off the hands, the feet and finally behead the child. This did not make the child angry either with his father or the executioner. Instead he radiated loving-kindness to them as well as to his lamenting mother impartially. *(Jataka III, p.181)*

When the meditator thinks thus of the conduct of the Bodhisatta (future Buddha), his resentment might subside. If he still cannot dispel his anger towards the other person, now he should meditate on the teaching of the Buddha. As the Buddha pointed out, "Brethren, it is not easy to find a being who has not formerly been your mother... father... brother... sister... son...daughter in a previous life of this incalculably long cycle of lives." *(Samyutta Nikaya, II, 189 -190)*

Reviewing these facts, the meditator should think of the other person thus: "This person, when she was my mother in a previous birth, carried me in her womb nearly ten months, and when I was a baby, she cleaned me from my excrements without any disgust, played with me on her lap

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and carried me in her arms. Thus she nourished me with such deep love. When this person was my father in a previous birth, he spent his life for me in pursuit of the trades or a profession with a view to earn wealth for my sake. When he was born as my brother, sister too, he or she treated me with loving care and gave me every possible kind of help for my well being. So it is unjust for me to harbour anger for him merely because of some disagreeable thing done to me in this life."

If the meditator still feels dislike for that person, he should remember the words of the Buddha, with which he expounded the eleven merits of the development of loving kindness, and consider how being angry would prevent him from achieving these.

If he still feels dislike for the other, he should consider the object of his dislike as a collection of impurities, as hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, etc., and should advise himself thus: "Are you angry with his hair, Or with his nails? Or with his flesh?, and so on. The body is a collection of elements according to the ultimate point of view. Are you angry with these elements?".

If he is still unable to dispel the dislike or anger, he should think of the object of his anger as a collection of five aggregates of existence (khandhas), and advise himself as thus: "Do you feel angry with the aggregates of matter, the aggregates of feelings, the aggregates of perceptions, the aggregates of mental formations or the aggregates of consciousness?" Reflecting this way he should be able to dispel his anger.

If the object of his dislike is a hostile person, the meditator should treat him generously, and then both will be able to be friendly and forget all enmities.

A further way to dispel anger is to find out the real author of the harm that caused the anger or the dislike to arise. Suppose the harm done was a blow with the hands, should one avenge the blow by attacking the hands of the person who dealt the blows? But the hands of that person dealt the blows under the directions of the mind. So the real author of the

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deed is the mind of the doer. But the mind is not any part of his body, but a flow of momentarily vanishing states arising and vanishing. Therefore all the mind-units of the present flow are not responsible for the deed. The responsibility lies with the mind-unit in which the anger arose and crazed it to use the hands to attack. But that mind-unit arose and vanished and is no more living now. Even in that mind-unit it is the anger associated with it that caused the deed. Therefore it is the anger that is the real author of the deed.

If you decide to avenge the deed by attacking him in return, the hidden enemy in that person's mind, the anger might arise in him. You are thus supporting and nourishing the enemy to arise again. This is no punishment, the act of nourishing an enemy instead of killing or destroying the enemy the anger.

Remembering the words of the Buddha, "Conquer anger by loving-kindness", "Enmity is appeased only by amity", if you extend loving-kindness to the hostile person, his anger, his enmity, will come to its cessation. Thus the real enemy is destroyed, the real way of avenging has been performed.

In this way the meditator should advise himself. Thus he can extend his good will towards the other.

THE PRACTICE

Loving-kindness (Metta-bhavana) meditation

First of all the meditator should repeat the formula of refuge:

"I take refuge in the Lord Buddha, I take refuge in the Holy Dhamma, I take refuge in the community of the saintly disciples of the Lord Buddha" This formula is to be said three times while reflecting on its meaning.

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Then he should repeat the formula of precepts, if he is a lay person, that is the determination to abstain from, killing, stealing, engaging in wrong sexual conduct, false speech and consuming intoxicants. Then he may begin the meditation by extending love or goodwill towards himself first. Let him aspire for his own well-being as follows:

"May I be free from all enmity, may I be free from all afflictions, may I be free from all anxiety, may I live in happiness."

To practise good-will in detail, one can give auto suggestion for health and happiness beginning from the head to all parts of one's body in succession. (By the practice of this kind of auto-suggestion regularly every day, one may be able to cure oneself of many a chronic ailment.) in this way:

"May my head be healthy inside and outside. Let it be free from all ailments ."

After this suggestion for a short time, one should feel one's head fully healthy. Then one should concentrate on his neck. For a short time one should practise this suggestion, "Let my neck be in good health, and be free from all ailments", until one feels one's neck fully healthy.

Then one should spread these suggestions successively to shoulders, arms, chest, belly, groin, thighs, legs and feet.

Then this practice should be continued from toe to head and head to toe several times, till one feels the whole body in good health.

Following this one should again meditate, "May I be healthy, may I be free from enmity, may I be free from all afflictions, may I be free from anxiety, may I live in happiness."

Mere words and thinking is not sufficient. While thinking, one should try to feel what one suggests to oneself.

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Next step is to think of a living person of the same sex, whom he (she) honours, either a parent, sibling, teacher or preceptor, and should extend the loving-kindness and good will to that person and suggest, "May he (she), like myself, be free of enmity, may he (she) be free of all afflictions, anxiety and may he (she) live happily."

Until one feels that one has suffused the other person with loving-kindness, one should extend good will towards him or her. Until the meditator feels that he is wishing profusely for the welfare of the other person, he should go on practising this meditation repeatedly.

Following this, the meditator should think of any person neutral or common (neither friendly nor unfriendly) and should extend loving kindness towards him(her), and wish him(her) as before: "May so and so, like myself be free from enmity, free from all afflictions, free from anxiety and live happily."

Lastly the meditator should think of an enemy, if there is any, or anybody who dislikes him(her) and should will and wish that person well in the very same way , as described above.

When the meditator has advanced to the stage of not feeling any difference between himself and others, he has been wishing well, he should understand that he has extended loving-kindness towards himself and others with no distinction whatsoever.

Now the meditator has reached the preliminary practice of loving-kindness successfully.

Now the meditator should think of all other human beings with no distinction as to sex, willing and wishing their welfare, and extend good will and loving-kindness towards them thus: "May all human beings ,like myself, be free of enmity,free of all afflictions, free from all anxiety, and may they all live happily."

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When the meditator has practised this way till he feels he has broken down all limitations and perceives no difference between himself and all other human beings, his mind becomes fixed on the same object (that all human beings are in a happy state) with no other thought arising whatsoever. This means the meditator has reached access ecstasy or upacara. Upacara is a deep and calm concentration of the mind and not a hypnotic trance.

Now the meditator should spread this good will and loving-kindness towards, all human, deva beings and all the beings in all galaxies in the whole universe gradually. When he concentrates on this loving-kindness meditation, he will attain to the first state of ecstasy (first jhana). This is a state of mind concentration, still deeper than access jhana, and is not ecstasy in an emotional sense as we commonly think of it. The word ecstasy has been used due to lack of another word to describe this deep concentration state of the mind. At this stage all mental hindrances (nivaranas), that is, sensuality, ill will, uncertainty, confusion and worry and sloth and torpor, will subside and be inhibited. Now the consciousness that arises within the meditator, is accompanied by five mental factors such as, applied thought, sustained thought, rapture, ease and one pointedness (vitakka-vicara-piti-sukha-ekaggata). This is the first ecstatic stage or pathama jhana. Once the meditator has attained to this jhana, he can enter it again and again and enjoy the bliss and peace of heart as long as he likes.

At this stage it is pertinent to recapture the eleven advantages, a person who has attained to the first jhana in loving-kindness meditation achieves:

1. He falls asleep easily.
2. He awakens from sleep in ease.
3. He does not have bad dreams.
4. He is loved by humans.
5. He is loved by non-humans (devas, Brahmas, ghosts and animals).
6. He is protected by devas.
7. Fire, poison and weapons do not harm him.

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8. His mind is easily concentrated on the object of meditation.
9. He develops a radiant complexion.
10. At the last moment of his life, he will pass away in calm with no pain.
11. If he has not developed his mind further by practice of insight meditation (vipassana), he will be born into the realm of Brahmas.

Having attained the first jhana , he should master it in five ways:

He should train his mind to turn in towards and enter the first jhana, at any place and at any time.

He should train his mind to remain in this jhana as long as he wishes.

He should train his mind to come out of the jhana at any time or any place he wishes.

He should train his mind to remember and examine the experience of the jhana after emerging from it.

The person who has attained the first jhana may spread his loving-kindness in several ways. He may use one mode of the wording in his practice, thus: "May all be free from enmity", "May all be free from conflict", "May all be free from anxiety" or "may all live happily".

The spread of loving-kindness may be practised in two ways, such as specified and unspecified.

The specified extension which again is seven-fold is as follows:

May all women be free from enmity.

May all men be free from enmity.

May all holy persons be free from enmity.

May all worldly beings be free from enmity.

May all devas be free from enmity.

May all humans be free from enmity.

May all beings of lower grades (than humans) be free from enmity.

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Again instead of enmity, the words all afflictions, all anxieties and live happily may be substituted.

When one extends loving-kindness towards all living beings regardless of any specifications as to sex, type of being etc., it is called unspecified extension or meditation of loving-kindness.

Another method is the extension of loving-kindness towards the beings in different directions, thus:

May all beings in the eastern direction be free from enmity (affliction etc.)

May all beings in the north-eastern direction be.....

May all beings in the northern direction be

May all beings in the north-western direction be.....

May all beings in the western direction be....

May all beings in the south-western direction be...

May all beings in the southern direction be....

May all beings in the south-eastern direction be....

May all beings in the downward direction be...

May all beings in the upward direction be

After the meditator has achieved mastery over the first jhana or ecstatic trance in the way mentioned earlier, enters and emerges from it thousands of times and becomes proficient in the practice, he will, easily be able to enter the second stage or jhana in which the consciousness will be accompanied by three factors, that is rapture, zest and one-pointedness of mind. The second jhana accompanied by these factors is also to be mastered in the five ways as described in the practice of the first jhana.

Once he mastered the second jhana in those five ways and practises it many times and becomes proficient in it, he can attain the third jhana without difficulty. The third jhana is accompanied by two factors, zest and one-pointedness. The meditator should have mastery over the third jhana also in the five ways described.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEDITATION ON COMPASSION (KARUNA BHAVANA)

The person who wishes to meditate and develop compassion should first consider the disadvantages of cruelty. He should also consider the greatness, value, advantages and merits of the development of compassion. Compassion is sympathy for those who undergo suffering, sorrow or misfortune. It arouses a person to help the sufferers. Therefore the object of the meditation of compassion should be a living being, who is undergoing some trouble or misfortune.

In the practice of compassion meditation, the meditator should at first spread his compassion towards any being of the same sex that suffers from some sort of trouble. Once he has spread compassion towards this person profusely, he should extend it to encompass dear ones and friends

Even a man living in luxury and shows no suffering will die one day and is reaching towards death every moment. All beings that are born are subject to decay and death. Taking these facts the meditator can spread compassion towards any being.

The order of spreading compassion is as follows: One person known to be suffering from some trouble, dear ones friends etc., neutral persons, enemies or persons who dislike the meditator, and finally towards oneself.

But according to other teachers, as mentioned in the commentary to the Anguttara Nikaya, first of all one should extend compassion towards the enemies, next to the neutral, then the dear ones and friends and lastly to oneself.

From all these descriptions it is clear that one should start the practice of meditation of compassion by extending compassion towards one who is under some misfortune at the present moment, and then extend it

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towards others who are destined to suffer from various troubles to come, generally regarding that all living beings are subject to decay, death and other sorts of troubles. The development of the meditation to the three jhanas is the same as that for loving-kindness. One who has attained to jhana stages in compassion meditation is also able to achieve the same advantages mentioned for loving-kindness meditation.

DEVELOPMENT OF SYMPATHETIC JOY (MUDITA-BHAVANA)

The meditator of sympathetic joy should practise it taking the dearest person to him of the same sex as the first object. Contemplating the past prosperity and good fortune of the object, the present prosperity and good fortune and the future prosperity and good fortune to come, the meditator should appreciate all that at first.

Then he can gradually spread the practice to include his enemies or persons who do not like him. At this stage if he cannot get rid of the dislike to his enemies, he should follow the instructions given in the loving-kindness meditation to reason out the dislike and remove it from his mind. Once he has removed the dislike for enemies, he can continue the practice of sympathetic joy meditation. He should extend the practice to oneself only as the last person .

After practising this meditation for sometime, when he feels no difference and sees and approves of prosperity of all beings alike, whether friend or foe, he will be able to attain the first jhana of the meditation of sympathetic joy. As described for the loving-kindness he should be able to master the first jhana and then attain second and third jhanas in succession. Sympathetic joy is the direct opposite of envy and jealousy.

DEVELOPMENT OF EQUANIMITY (APACHE - BHAVANA)

The development of equanimity (apache) can be successfully practised by a person who has practised anyone of the previous three meditations. After entering the third jhana by means of one of the three previous meditations, one should extend the feeling of equanimity towards

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a neutral person of the same sex. He should enter the first, second and third stages in order, practising the extension of equanimity meditation. Then he should extend it to his dear ones, towards the enemy and then oneself finally. When he can see all beings from the angle of equanimity, he will enter the fourth or catuttha-jhana, accompanied by mental factors of equanimity and one-pointedness.

The person who has practised equanimity meditation also is subject to the same advantages described in loving-kindness. But the fourth jhana is still deeper than the third jhana achieved in the previous three meditations. If such a person does not proceed further by turning the channel to the practice of insight or vipassana, he will be reborn after death in a still higher realm of brahmas than the person who practised the other three meditations.

MERITS OF FRIENDLINESS (MITTANISANSA)

A person who is not treacherous, who is honest in his friendliness, wherever he goes will be welcomed with greater hospitality. For many he will be their resort.

A person who is not treacherous and is honest is honoured in every country, village or city he goes.

A person who is not treacherous and is honest, will not be attacked by thieves and robbers. Government officials will not look down upon him. He will be victorious amid his enemies.

A person who is not treacherous but is honest in his friendliness, as he is hospitable wins hospitality of others in turn. Honouring others he is honoured. He earns name and fame.

A person who is not treacherous but is honest in his friendliness, as he is generous, will be treated with generosity by others. Respecting others he will be respected. He will be prosperous and illustrious.

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A person who is not treacherous and is honest in his friendliness will shine among others like a burning fire. He will never fall from prosperity.

A person not treacherous but is honest in his friendliness, will find increase in his cattle stock, and will have his fields yielding rich crops. He will enjoy abundance from what he sows. (At the time of the Buddha, possession of cattle was regarded as a mark of a rich man.)

A person who is not treacherous but is honest to his friends, even though he falls from a precipice or any height, will not suffer injury. He will be protected by the powers of nature.

A person who is not treacherous and is honest to his friends, cannot be removed from his place by enemies, just as a deep rooted banyan tree cannot be overthrown by a storm.

(Muapakkha Jataka - Jataka 538)

CHAPTER TEN

MEDITATION ON BREATHING

(ANAPANA-SATI)

There are two kinds of meditation (bhavana) namely, the one that leads to full concentration, stillness, peace and ease of mind, and the other that leads to Realization or Enlightenment and thereby to perfect freedom of mind. Out of these two, the one that leads to full concentration consists of forty different methods of reaching higher stages of concentration. In this essay I shall deal with the method that utilizes one's breath as the object of concentration.

It must first be expressed that a person who expects to achieve success in his spiritual development must, be of good morals. At least he must practise the five precepts (panca-sila) :

1. Refraining from hurting and taking others life.
2. Refraining from taking what others have not given willingly.
3. Refraining from sexual misconduct.
4. Refraining from false speech.
5. Refraining from consumption of intoxicants.

In addition to this he must also refrain from wrong means of earning his livelihood.

Those who wish to attain to higher states of concentration, should practise sense-control and also lead a pure celibate life.

The person should next select a suitable place for his meditation. This place must be free of disturbances and be a secluded place. In the early days of Buddhism, persons who wished to practise meditation, used to retire to the forests or remote areas of groves, to a deserted shelter,

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under a shady tree or an empty house. In a society which is noisy and full of disturbances, it is impossible to carry out such practices in the daytime. But at night, after every body had retired to bed and silence reigns, it is not difficult, I believe, to practise any kind of meditation.

THE FIRST STAGE OF PRACTICE

At the start of practice, the meditator should sit down in a comfortable way and make a strong resolution to carry out his practice for his spiritual development. Then he may dedicate himself to his teacher. At this point he is ready to start his practice.

The meditation is started by watching with the mind, his breathing, inhalation and exhalation. He should not force his breath, but be just aware of his breath as it passes in and out. (while the breath goes in and comes out automatically without any control on it). All he has to do is be mindful, attentive and watchful of his breathing. If he is a person with a long nose, he would be able to feel the breath touching the tip of his nose on its way in and out. If he has a relatively short nose, he may feel it on his upper lip. He should fix his mind and attention on the spot where the breath first touches, the tip of the nose or the upper lip, as the case may be. At first his mind may wander at times to some experience in the past or some design for the future. But again and again he should try to bring his attention back to the breathing and continue to watch it. This wandering of the mind can also be reduced by counting his breath while watching it.

One can start counting the inhalations or exhalations when they touch the tip of the nose or the upper lip, according to his wish. He should repeat the count, for example till he feels the next breath (inhaled or exhaled as he started counting) touches the tip of the nose or the upper lip. Then he can repeat the count two till the next breath and so on up to five. After counting five he should start another cycle with one and this time proceed up to six. After counting this second round he should continue his third round up to seven. He should proceed his rounds

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increasing the count up to ten. Thus the five rounds each increasing from five to ten form one set.

After completing the first set he should start counting the second set. Now he may continue as long as one hour counting sets of breathing as shown above. If his mind wanders, as soon as he is aware of it, he should bring it back to the breathing. In this way he should practise at least for one hour in each session for twice a day. Meditators who have devoted their life for meditation may continue for the whole day, except when attending to their bodily needs.

SECOND STAGE

When the meditator has been successful in preventing his mind's wandering and has been able to fix it strongly on the spot touched first by his breath, it is no longer necessary to count his breathing. At this stage he should fix his mind on the whole breath, and be watchful as to its nature. If his breath is long he should be aware that it is long, and if it is short he should be aware that it is short. He may think, if it is long, "I inhale long", and if his breath is short, "I inhale short". While exhaling also he should notice if it is long or short. This practice should be continued as long as one hour at least. He should be careful not to let any breath pass unnoticed. When one continues this practice, this meditation, he will feel that his breathing becomes little by little more and more subtle and gentle.

THE THIRD STAGE

The third stage starts with being aware of the whole breath. From the beginning when it touched the tip of the nose or the upper lip, to the middle and the end of the breath. Similarly with the exhalation from the beginning to the middle and the end. The end of the inhalation is a feeling near the navel caused by the muscle movements as the lungs expand. The beginning of the exhalation is the start of the movement at the navel and ends at the tip of the nose or the upper lip. At the beginning the meditator might feel either the beginning or the middle or the end only. Sometimes he may be able to bring his awareness to two of them only and not all

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three moments. The meditator should make an effort to bring his mind to be aware of all three stages of each inhalation and exhalation .

This is like a man standing at the fulcrum of a see-saw, moving it down on one side and then the other side. But he is aware of the position of the ends while being at the middle. The meditator also, although he has fixed his mind at the tip of the nose, should be aware of the stages of each breath. This is due to the expansion and development of his mindfulness.

THE FOURTH STAGE

By now the meditator feels, that his breath has calmed down. If he does not feel so, he should carry out the previous practice with special effort to make his breath subtle in its course, gentle and calm. After a short time, he will be successful and his breath will become calm and subtle. When he is successful in this effort, both his body and mind will become light. They may become so light that occasionally his body might float up in the air.

When the meditator properly develops concentration of his mind on his breath in this manner, he will eventually perceive his own breath as a force of wind touching his nostrils or as something like cotton touching the same spot. This is called the reflection or replica of the breath (Uggaha-nimitta, the thing learned or taken into mind from the outer object, that is, his breath .)

The more the meditator fixes his mind and attention on his breath in this manner, the farther his mind goes away from the impediments: sensuality (kamacchanda), ill will (vyapada), sluggishness and lethargy (thinamiddha), restlessness and worry (uddacca kukkucca), and uncertainty (vicikicchā). After some practice, when he comes to the fourth stage of his development, the five impediments will recede still further, his mind will become still purer, and its object, the breath, will appear still brighter. To some, it appears as a cluster of stars or as one star or one gem; to others as a cluster of gems; to others, as a cluster of pearls, as a puff of smoke,

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as a stretched cobweb, as a film of cloud, as a lotus flower, as a chariot wheel, as the sun, as the moon, or as some other bright object. This is called the counterpart object (patibhaga-nimitta). When a counterpart object has appeared, the meditator must be very careful not to let it disappear, for if it somehow disappears, it will be very difficult to make it reappear. This usually happens due to carelessness, specially if he is proud, thinking that he has become successful and allows his thoughts to run towards any tempting object which makes him lustful or angry and the like. If this happens he will find that the level of development of his mind which has risen to such a height comes down to that of an ordinary, undeveloped man. Therefore to guard and protect the counterpart object, he must avoid the following factors:

1. Unsuitable abodes (places where there are disturbances like frequent visitors, noises and other distractions);
2. Unsuitable resort (where there is difficulty in obtaining food and other requisites);
3. Unsuitable speech (which disturbs or discourages his practice);
4. Unsuitable association (which disturbs or discourages his practice);
5. Unsuitable food (which is disagreeable to his taste or harmful to his health);
6. Unsuitable posture (a posture which is not comfortable to him. The teacher of meditation practice should not force his disciple to be in a posture, or to adapt himself to a posture which is not comfortable to him, because it makes his practice a failure or delays his progress);
7. Unsuitable climate (a cold or hot one which is disagreeable or harmful to his health).

As regards his further practice, he should repeatedly turn his mind towards the counterpart object. By doing so, his mind will be strongly

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fixed on the object, and it will not easily disappear. Now, he should accomplish proficiency in ecstatic concentration by fulfilling the following ten conditions:

1. Keeping his body, dress and abode clean
2. Developing the evenness of five mental faculties; (a) confidence, (b) energy or effort, (c) mildness, (d) concentration and (e) the faculty of reasoning.
3. Cultivating skill in protecting the counterpart object.
4. Exerting his mind where it should be exerted.
5. Restraining his mind when it should be restrained.
6. Encouraging his mind when it is dejected.
7. Controlling his mind when it is exuberant.
8. Avoiding persons who have not developed concentration as much as he can.
9. Associating with persons who have developed concentration.
10. Being resolute about the development of concentration.

The meditator who energetically follows the instructions given thus far will be able to attain to the first ecstatic trance (What is meant here is not a hypnotic state, sleepy or inactive mood, but a woken state of mind, fully awake and open and fixed on the point of concentration to exclude other thoughts whatever). This is known as jhana in Pali, and later became translated into Chan in Chinese and eventually as Zen in Japanese.

But even though he attained this jhana by means of fixing his mind on the counterpart object, it is better at this stage and also safer for him to try to expand this counterpart object at this point in his practice. This should be attempted in this manner: he should first mentally delimit the counterpart object in length and breadth by one inch all round, then two inches all round, three inches and so on. Thus extending the boundary successively he should make it appear one foot all round, two feet and so on till it appears as large as an open umbrella. Then he may if he wish, enlarge it to the size of a house, a town or a city or the infinite space. When it is expanded to infinite space it will appear as an infinite light. But it is not necessary to expand it to such a size. When he expanded it to the

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size of an open umbrella, it is quite sufficient to fix his mind firmly on it and attain to the first ecstatic trance or the first jhana.

When he comes to this concentrated state of first jhana, he experiences the five constituents of the first trance: applied thought (vitakka), sustained thought (vicara), joy (piti), ease (sukha) and one pointedness (ekaggata). These five factors of the first jhana make the mind's fixation on the object stronger and strongly suppress or inhibit the five impediments (nivaranas): applied thought inhabiting sluggishness and lethargy; sustained thought inhibiting uncertainty; joy inhibiting ill-will; comforts inhibiting restlessness and worry; and one-pointedness inhibiting sensuality. The meditator who has attained this first jhana experiences a feeling of ease and joy or happiness, full of ecstasy and peace never before even dreamt of by him.

Having attained this first jhana, the meditator should now master it in five ways, otherwise he will not be able to rise higher in his practice. He must master it by referring to it (Avjjana), by entering it (samaphajana), by steadying it (adhittana), by emerging from it (vutthana) and by reviewing it (paccavekkhana) repeatedly till he is proficient.

When he has mastered it by referring to it he can turn his thoughts towards the jhana at any place at any time with no difficulty. When he has mastered it by entering it he is able to enter the jhana at any place at any moment. Mastering it by steadying it he can remain in the jhana state as long as he likes. Mastering by emerging he develops the ability to emerge from it at any time at any place. The review is to be able to remember and examine the nature of the jhana state, the nature of its mental factors and the like, exactly as they are at any place and at any time.

When he has achieved mastery of the first jhana in these five ways, he should now try to attain the next higher state, the second ecstatic trance or jhana known as the second jhana.

The meditator who has mastered the first jhana begins to see applied thought (vitakka) and sustained thought (vicara), the first two

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constituents of the first jhana as gross states of mind, although when he first experienced them he felt they were fine states of mind. He feels that it would be better to attain the jhana without these two qualities. So he enters the first jhana thousands and thousands of times and tries to enter the jhana without experiencing these two mental states as an accompaniment. As he becomes more and more familiar with the jhana state, and closer to the counter-point object, he will finally gain the ability to enter the jhana state without the applied thought and sustained thought (vitakka and vicara). Then the constituent mental factors that remain are only three namely, joy (piti), comfort and ease of mind (sukha) and one-pointedness (ekaggata). This is the second jhana or ecstatic state of mind.

Once he gains the second jhana state, he should master it and become proficient and familiar with this state, in five ways as explained for the first jhana. Once he masters it and becomes proficient and familiar with it, he will realize that the mental accompaniment joy (piti) is also no longer a fine state, but a gross state of mind, although he did not realize it during the first jhana and at the early practice of the second jhana. Then the meditator begins to feel that he must enter the second jhana without joy (piti) accompanying the state of mind. As previously explained he should try practising the jhana thousands of times and become very proficient in it, and then he will gain the ability of gaining the jhana state without the mental factor of joy (piti). Now he is able to enter the jhana state and experience with only two constituent mental factors namely, comfort and ease of mind (sukka) and one-pointedness (ekaggata). This state of mind is called the third jhana or ecstatic state of mind.

As described above he must now practise and master the third jhana in the same way, till he begins to feel that comfort and ease of mind (sukka) is a gross state of mind closer to sensual pleasures of mind. Then he will develop the need to try to be rid of this mental factor. This should be done as before by mastering the third jhana and becoming proficient and familiar with it by practising it thousands of times. Soon he begins to feel the comfort and ease a pleasant feeling turning into equanimity (an indifferent feeling). Once he is rid of ease and comfort and developed equanimity of mind he is left with one-pointedness only from the original

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five constituents of the first jhana. This state of mind is the fourth jhana where only equanimity and one-pointedness are the accompanying mental factors. He must now master this jhana as before by practising it and becoming proficient with it in the five ways described for the first three jhanas.

Once he has become proficient with the fourth jhana, he may if he wants to develop psychic powers such as, levitation, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, thought-reading, thought transference and remembering past lives etc. But he must be cautious not to be tempted by these powers and be attached to them, for such attachment will become an obstacle to his further spiritual development. Indeed, many a person has lost all powers and their state of mental development in this way.

After becoming familiar and proficient with this jhana, and as the meditator begins to review it and examine the nature of it, he will begin to see many faults and gross qualities of this mental state, which he did not realize at first. He will begin to see that it is still a gross sensual state, that will result in his gaining rebirth after death, in a realm where beings have a subtle material body, which is still subject to decay and death. Seeing so many defects of this state of development of the mind in the fourth jhana, he will now strive to attain to a state entirely rid of materiality.

TRANCES DEALING WITH THE MENTAL PLANE

At this stage the meditator expands and extends the counterpart object (the light) infinitely in conceptualized space. After he has done so and seen mentally that the light has spread everywhere in the conceptualized space, he should fix his mind in it and remain so for some time. Then he should emerge from that state and recollect what he has seen in the trance. When he is able to recall it clearly he should will and make the light disappear. Then the light will disappear, after some effort and he will see the empty conceptualized space. This is not a reality, but a concept. He should fix his mind on this empty conceptualized space, which might need some effort on his part. When he has concentrated and

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fixed his mind on this empty conceptualized space, this state is called the ecstatic state or jhana of the infinite conceptualized space (akasannancayatana-samadhi). This is the first trance of the pure mental plane.

He should now master this samadhi in the same five ways described for all the states above. Once he has mastered this samadhi, he will begin to feel that it is still nearer the material states of life and will get the urge to attain to a still finer state of mind. To do so he should enter the samadhi and emerge from it and recall the nature of the state of mind he had entered in the samadhi. After some effort he will be able to fix his present consciousness on the previous consciousness or state of mind. This is a very subtle concept on which he is fixing his mind. This will lead to his state of mind progressing to a much finer state than before. This concentrated state of mind is called the state of infinite consciousness or vinnanancayatana-samadhi. This is the second samadhi of the pure mental plane.

This samadhi also needs to be mastered in the five ways and experienced over and over before he can progress to a higher stage. When he has mastered it he will become unsatisfied with the finer quality of this state of mind. Then he should enter the second samadhi, emerge from it and turn his attention towards the nature of the absence of consciousness of infinite space at the present moment. Though this is a difficult concept to handle, with effort he will succeed in fixing his mind on the nature of the absence of infinite space. This trance or samadhi in which his mind is fixed on the absence of infinite space is the third samadhi and is called the "trance of nothingness." He should master the samadhi in the five ways. When he has mastered this samadhi, he may enter it, remain in it for some time, and on emerging, look back and recollect the nature of the state of mind in the samadhi. He will realize it to be a very fine state. He will now fix his present consciousness on the previous consciousness and experience its calmness and bliss. At this stage he will feel this to be the highest and finest state of mind. He will also feel that it is neither consciousness or unconsciousness (neva-sanna-nasanna).

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One can mistake this state of mind for the eternal bliss of Nirvana. It is not so. Those who have developed these four samadhi (samadhi of infinite space, smadhi of infinite consciousness, the samadhi of absence of infinite consciousness and the samadhi of neither consciousness or unconsciousness) when they pass away will be born in a pure mental (spiritual) state for a cycle of time. When the force generated by the practice is spent, they will return to the human world in a subsequent rebirth. If they want to go back to the same mental plane they have to start practising again from the beginning. Thus these persons are still in the worldly existence.

The Bodhisatta (Buddha before attaining enlightenment), the ascetic Siddharta Gautama, developed the concentration until he attained these four samadhis, examined it and found that the bliss of such samadhi would last only for a limited period of time and that it was not eternal. So he did not stop at this stage and progressed further and discovered the path of vipassana. It is treading the path of vipassana that he attained to full realization. This path is called Anapana-vipassana.

ANAPANA - VIPASSANA.

Vipassana may be practised in two ways: One depends on the samadhis or ecstatic trances and the other does not depend on it. First the way to practise vipassana on the ecstatic trance will be explained.

The meditator enters any one of the samadhis and emerges from it after a short time. Then he reviews the nature of the trance consciousness, its constituents and the object upon which they depend, which he valued so long and attained to with much difficulty. Then he begins to realize that all those states are impermanent, unsatisfactory and lacking in an entity. He examines his breath, the spot of the breath's first contact, the consciousness that arises from it together with the feeling and how they are conditioned. In this inward search further he will perceive clearly that all those states, both mental and physical, are conditioned, phenomenal, transient, restless, unsatisfactory and insubstantial. When he has realized the unsteadiness, unsatisfactory nature and ego-lessness of his mind-body

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process he has cleared his mind of error, achieving purity of view (ditthi-visuddhi). At this stage he begins to see that there is no particular thing called breath, but an ever changing flow of very minute units of matter containing four primary qualities: hardness or softness, cohesion, temperature or energy and vibration, combined in various degrees.

On further examination how these material and mental states arise, he meets with the law of causal genesis (paticca-samuppada). He begins to understand that the aggregate of material and mental states which he has mistaken for so long as "I", has been caused by attachment or craving (tanha) for such an existence. This attachment or craving has been caused and conditioned by ignorance (avijja) as to the nature of such existence. He sees that ignorance, craving and volitional formations conditioned in turn has brought about the present phenomenal existence, and that the same conditions, if not rooted out will give rise to future phenomenal existence.. Thus he examines and sees clearly and in detail this law of causal genesis and clears his uncertainty about the nature of his own existence, and by inference that of other living beings. He sees very clearly without doubt the three signata in his whole existence, impermanence, unsatisfactory nature and insubstantiality or ego-lessness, which he has mistaken as "himself": This is called kanka-vitarana-visuddhi.

Because of this knowledge and purity of heart, he feels extremely joyful. This happiness or bliss influences his blood stream, leading an aura to emanate from his body. In addition to extreme bliss, he also feels very energetic, even-minded and more self-confident. He also is more mindful and has a sharp awareness developed in him. He may mistake these pleasant feelings to be the attainment of Arahantship or full perfection and stop further advancement. But this state will not remain permanent and he will revert back to his former mental level and may fall further due to his misunderstanding.

But the wise meditator discretely examines and scrutinizes his new gains and finds out that he still has not removed his attachment to worldliness. He clearly sees that these new gains or powers are but obstacles to his further progress. He also perceives the transiency,

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insubstantiality and unsatisfactory nature of these gains. He also realizes that the only path he has to take is to determine more clearly the nature of psycho-physical process. This attainment of understanding is called "the purity achieved by discrimination between right and wrong paths" (maggamagga-nana-elassanavisuddhi).

Now he goes forward examining the material side as well as the mental side of his life and sees still more clearly the instantaneous rise and fall of the mental and material states of his life. This clear perception is called "the knowledge of rise and fall of states" (Udaya-vyaya-nana).

In progressing this way, more and more deep analysis of the ephemeral nature of his physical and mental states, begins to show more clearly, their dreadful quality of breakdown and fall. Understanding of this nature of decay of physical and mental states is called "The knowledge of the fall" (bhanga-nana).

When he sees clearly, the constant decay and death of constituents of his so called "self", he begins to see it as a terror. This realization is called "the knowledge of the terror in the nature of the so called self" (bhaya-nana).

This leads to the realization that the attachment to his mind-matter processes is a danger. This is called "the knowledge of danger" (adinava-nana).

The dawn of realization of the dangerous nature of his mind-matter processes or psycho-physical nature of his existence leads to a strong dislike to it. This is called "knowledge accompanied by strong dislike" (nibbida-nana).

On meditation more deeply, he feels anxious to get rid of this troublesome burden of mind-body continuity. This stage of eagerness is called "the knowledge accompanied by the desire for freedom" (muncitukmyata-nana).

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While he still meditates over the changing nature of phenomenal existence, he perceives that there is no reason to be distressed over it, as there is no ego or "I" to suffer from the horrors of this existence. On further consideration he sees that the momentary rise and fall are inherent and unavoidable characteristics of all conditioned things, i.e., mental and physical states. This stage is called "the knowledge of reflecting contemplation" (patisankhanupassana-nana).

As he proceeds meditating over the voidness of "I" in the conditioned states, both mental and physical, he feels neither worried nor delighted at any thing whatever that happens to the body or mind. He begins to perceive all such with indifference and equanimity. This experience is called "the knowledge which sees conditioned things with indifference" (sankharupekkha-nana).

When he has come to perceive the nature of conditioned things having experienced on his own by meditation, his attachment to existence in the world begins to wane. The three signata of all conditioned things, namely impermanence, unsatisfactory nature and egolessness, becomes clearer and clearer in his mind's eye. This insight rises to a higher maturity. At this stage, the end of two or three mind-units (thought moments) fixed on one of the signs of conditioned things is followed by a mind unit that leaves the conditioned things as the object of the mind stream. Immediately his mind fixes on a new object, the unconditioned element, which hazily appears. The immediate next thought moment or mind-unit is fixed on the element of Nibbana (the unconditioned state). As a clear vision of the Nibbana appears in his mind's eye, all doubts about the path he is following, the goal (Nibbana) and the expounder of the path (Buddha), are instantly rooted out, together with the belief in an ego. He also eradicates the regards for rituals and ceremonies. This consciousness is called the "consciousness of the first path" - the consciousness which has entered the path for sainthood (arahantship) or the consciousness which has entered the holy stream (sotapatti-magga-citta). This consciousness is immediately followed by two or three mind-units or thought moments fixing themselves on the same object - Nibbana- the unconditioned state.

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This latter mind -units are called "the consciousness of fruition or attainment of stream entry" (sotapatti-phala-citta).

If a person who attained to the consciousness of fruition of stream entry, cannot develop further to a higher stage of the path during the present life time, he will be reborn only seven times, before developing higher stages and reaching the goal of Nibbana. But if he strives hard he may be able to attain to the next stage in the same life, in which he attenuates the remaining passions and glimpses the vision of Nibbana again. This stage is called the stage of once-returner (sakadagami), since he will be reborn only once after the present life in the sensual realms before developing his mind to a higher stage.. Having attained to the stage of once-returner, if he strives harder, he may reach the third stage, the stage of non-returner (anagami). In reaching this stage he eradicates all sensual desires and ill-will. A person who has reached this stage will not be born again in the sensual realms, and if not successful in reaching the goal in his present life, will be born in a world called Suddhavasa, where higher beings Brahmas are found, and will develop his mind further in that realm to reach Nibbana. The next stage is perfect sainthood or arahantship which is reached by eradicating all the remaining passions of the mind. This is the completion of the journey, the stage of having reached the goal , the unconditioned state Nibbana.

Some meditators may practise insight-development or vipassana from the beginning without trying to attain to jhanas or ecstatic trances. This is the second method..

They start with mindfulness of inhalation and exhalation of the breath. Here also the breath is counted as in the first method. Having mastered concentration on the breath, they stop counting and develop mindfulness on the nature of the breath, long and short. and the stages of each movement, the start, the middle and the end. Then they examine the feeling that arises from the touch of the breath at the start, and realizes the impermanence, the unsatisfactory state and the egolessness of this feeling and feelings in general. Then they examine the consciousness that arises from the feeling (mind-units), perception (sanna) and the other

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mental factors of the consciousness (sankhara) that arises together with the consciousness of feeling. They come to realize that these are impermanent, unsatisfactory and egoless or insubstantial. In this way they develop vipassana and purity of view (ditthi-visuddhi), purity by eradicating uncertainty (kankha-vitharana-visuddhi), purity by discriminating between right and wrong paths (maggamagga-nanadassana-visuddhi), purity of thoughts through the course of development of insight (patipada-nanadassana-visuddhi). They develop the seven factors in this meditation also, like in the first method and attain to the stages described above in the path or the holy stream.

SIXTEEN POINTS OF ANAPANA-SATI MEDITATION

First tetrad

1. He breathes in and out with attention to it.
2. He breathes in and out with attention to the length of duration of the breath.
3. He breathes with awareness of the beginning, the middle and the end of each breath in and out.
4. While calming down his breath he breathes in and out.

Second tetrad

1. He trains himself to experience joy in the first and second jhanas.
2. He trains himself to experience ease in the first, second and third jhanas.
3. He trains himself to experience and know feelings and perceptions while inhaling and exhaling (in all four jhanas).
4. He trains himself to breathe in and out while he calms down his inhalation and exhalation.

Third tetrad

1. He trains himself to perceive the mind in jhana state while breathing in and out.

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2. He trains himself to experience joy in the first, second and third jhanas while breathing in and out.
3. He trains himself to inhale and exhale while keeping his mind fixed on the counterpart object.
4. He trains himself to free his mind from hindrances at the access trance or jhana and the first jhana, freeing his mind from applied thought and sustained thoughts at the second jhana mind of joy at the third jhana, freeing his mind of ease at the fourth jhana, and freeing his mind from passions while practising vipassana until he attains to arahantship.

Fourth tetrad

1. He trains himself to contemplate impermanence while breathing in and out (even without attaining jhanas)
2. He trains himself to perceive momentary decay of mental physical states, and realizes Nibbana, while breathing in and out.
3. He trains himself to see the decay and dea physical states and also of the passions while breathing in and out.
4. He trains himself to abandon passions by the practice of vipassana and perceiving Nibbana at the four holy stages of the path (Anapan-sati Sutta - Majjhima-Nikaya).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THIRTY SEVEN CONSTITUENTS OF ENLIGHTENMENT (BODHIPAKKHIYA-DHAMMA)

The mind is not an unchanging entity but a stream of various kinds of consciousness going forward, each consciousness rising and vanishing, successively. Each and every consciousness of this mind stream is associated with a number of mental factors or characteristics or properties which are termed 'Cetasikas' in Pali. Some of these mental factors are wholesome, beautiful or positive, some are unwholesome or ugly or negative and some others are neither positive nor negative but neutral. It is these mental factors or characteristics that make each consciousness or thought wholesome, positive and good or unwholesome, negative and bad.

A thought or consciousness which arises together with unwholesome, negative or bad cetasikas like, anger, jealousy, greed and the like is called unwholesome, negative, ugly or bad thought. In Pali it is called akusala-citta. That which arises with wholesome, beautiful, good or positive cetasikas like, kindness, compassion, and the like is called wholesome, positive, good or beautiful thought. The Pali terminology for such is kusala-citta.

All thoughts or consciousness arise with an object in focus. These objects for thoughts are classified into four grades or levels depending on the realm or the plane or the sphere to which the object belongs to.

First is the sensuous realm or kama-loka to which humans, lower animals, some devas belong to. These thoughts arise in the beings who exist with both material body and mind dominated by sense objects such as visible forms, sounds, odours, tastes and tangible objects.

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Some beings who are tired of sensual worlds seek peace and serenity of mind by following a system of development of the mind's calm, the meditations and attain to a certain high level of mind concentration and development or jhana in which state, sensuality, ill-will and many other unwholesome thoughts are inhibited. These beings, after death will be reborn into a plane or realm or sphere of existence known as the subtle corporeal realm, called rupavacara loka. The thoughts connected to these are called rupavacara-cittas. These are the thoughts or cittas of the second grade.

The third grade belongs to beings who disgusted with all materiality seek a way to rid of the material state, by a kind of meditation that promotes detachment of mind from material and corporeal existence, and are reborn after death in a state where the physical body grows as in kama-lokas or subtle as in rupavacara lokas are inhibited. They have only a mind state and do not have a material or physical state. This realm or sphere is called incorporeal realm or arupavacara loka. The thoughts that belong to this level are arupavacara-citta .

These three types of thoughts are all mundane or worldly as the existence in all three realms described above and are subject to change, decay and death ultimately.

The fourth grade of thoughts called lokuttara-citta or supramundane thoughts arise in beings who understand the unsatisfactory nature, insubstantiality and impermanence of the mundane or worldly existence and try to be free from these by the meditation method called insight meditation or vipassana meditation. In the vipassana meditation, the meditator tries to understand the ego or "I". By mental analysis he finds that firstly the body is a collection of ever changing material states and that they are impermanent (continually rising and vanishing) unsatisfactory and lacking in any ever lasting thing that could be called "I" in it. Secondly by inspection of the mind, he perceives that it is an ever changing stream of mental states with allied mental factors or cetasikas, each mental state arising and vanishing momentarily giving rise to another. Thus he perceives clearly that there is no unchanging "I" in the mind also.

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By inference from the results of analysis of his body and mind, he sees the same nature of the lives of the other beings.

When he practises vipassana meditation in this way, the types of consciousness and their mental characteristics or cetasikas are naturally inclined towards realization of the true nature of life or Bodhi, and not inclined towards the desire for existence in the world. These consciousness are characterised as constituents of enlightenment or Bodhi-pakkhiya - dhamma. They are mainly fourteen in number, but with subdivisions of some of them, are counted in all as thirty seven.

The fourteen constituents and their subdivisions are named as follows:

- 1. Citta (consciousness in vipassana meditation) and cittiddhipada (impulsive consciousness as basis of success in the practice).**
- 2. Chanda (desire to practice) - chandhippada (desire for practice as basis for success).**
- 3. Ekaggata (one pointedness) - samadhindriya (one-pointedness as controlling factor samadhi-bala (one-pointedness as power to dispel mental defilements). samadhi-bhoggaha (one-pointedness as a factor in realising truths). samma-samadhi (right concentration as an action of fixing mind and all its states on the object of vipassana meditation).**
- 4. Viriya (effort) - four sammappadhanas, effort to prevent arisen defilements, effort to dispel already arisen defilements, effort to produce wholesome states of minds, efforts to develop already arisen wholesome states of minds. viriyiddhipada (effort being basis of success in vipassana practice). viriyindriya (effort as controlling faculty in vipassana practice). viriya bala (effort to drive away opposing unwholesome states). viriya - sam-boggaha (effort as an encouraging factor in realization of truths). sammavayama (effort as a factor pushing forward at every step of practice or treading the path).**

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5. Vitakka (shifting the mind on the object of vipassana. sammasankappa (right thinking).
6. Piti (joy,zest) - piti-sambojjhanga (zest or joy as an encouraging factor of the action of realizing truths).
7. Saddha (self confidence, confidence in the Buddha or in meditation teacher). - saddhindriya (confidence as a controlling faculty).- saddhabala (confidence as a power in dispelling opposing unwholesome states).
8. Sati (mindfulness) - satindriya (mindfulness as a controlling factor). - sati-bala (mindfulness as a power unwholesome states).- satisambojjhanaga (mindfulness as a factor in helping the realization of truths). - sammasati (right mindfulness as a step on the path of practice) - four satipatthanas (mindfulness developed in four ways discerning the physical body, feelings, consciousness, mental formations or ideas).
9. Virati (Abstention) speech - samma-vaca (abstention from wrong speech)
- 10 Virati (abstention) actions samma-kammanata (abstention from wrong actions).
- 11 Virati (abstention) livelihood - samma-ajiva (abstention from wrong livelihood).
- 12 Passadhi (tranquillity) - passadhi-sambojjhanga (tranquillity of mind as a factor of realization of truths).
- 13 Panna (reasoning, insight, understanding, wisdom) samma-ditthi (right view as to the nature of flow of mind and matter or right view of truths). - vimamsiddhipada (investigation as a basis of success in vipassana).- pannindriya (insight as the controlling faculty in perceiving truths). - panna-bala (insight and reasoning

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faculty as a power in dispelling opposing unwholesome states or akusala). - dhammavicaya-sambojjhanga

14 Tatramajjhata (equanimity) - apache-sambojjhanga (balance of mind and mental states as a factor of mind in realization of truths.

Synopsis

1.	Citta	-cittiddhipada	1
2.	Chanda	-chandiddhipada	1
3.	Ekaggata	-samadhindriya	
		samadhi-bala	
		samadhi-sambojjhanga	
		samma-samadhi	4
4.	Viriya		4
		sammappadhanas	
		viriyiddhipada	
		viriyindriya	
		viriya-bala	
		viriya-sambojjhanga	
		sammavayama	9
5.	Vitakka	- sammasankappa	1
6.	Piti	- piti-sambojjhanga	1
7.	Saddha	- saddhindriya	
		saddha-bala	2
8.	Sati	-satindriya	
		sati-bala	
		sati-sambojjhanga	
		sammāsati	
		four satipatthanas	8
9.	Virati	- samma-vaca	
10	Virati	- samma-kammanta	
11	Virati	- samma-ajiva	3
12	Passaddhi	-passadhi-sambojjhanga	1
13	Panna	- sammadhitthi	

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	vimamsiddhipada	
-	pannindriya	
-	panna-bala	
	dhammavichaya-sambojjhanga	5
14	Tatramajjhatthata -apache-sambojjhanga	1
	Total	37

These factors are also given in the texts as, four mindfulness, four efforts, four bases of success, five controlling faculties, five mental powers, seven factors of enlightenment and eight factors of the pat

The four ways of developing mindfulness are, with regard to body, feelings, types of consciousness that arise and the mental states and ideas that arise (dhamma).

Four kinds of right effort are, the effort to overcome evil or unwholesome thoughts that have arisen, effort to avoid arising of evil thoughts, efforts to arouse good or wholesome thoughts and efforts to develop the wholesome thoughts that have arisen.

The four means of accomplishment or basis for success are, desire or will for the practice of vipassana, effort to continue and complete the practice, consciousness or thought devoted whole to the practice, and investigation or reasoning for the completion of practice.

Five faculties controlling the mind for realization of the truth are, confidence, effort or energy, mindfulness, concentration of mind and full understanding or insight or wisdom.

There are seven constituents of enlightenment namely, mindfulness, investigation of the truth, supreme effort, joy or rapture at the realization of the truth, tranquillity or quietitude that arises with the realization of the truth, the concentration that arises with the realization of the truth and the equanimity of the mind that arises with the realization of the truth.

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The eight path-constituents are, right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration

The path of vipassana leads to self purification and realization of the goal. According to the texts this path is divided into seven stages. First stage is sila-visuddhi or purification through building a good moral character. The second is citta-visuddhi, purification of mind by concentration or meditation to suppress defilements. Next is ditti-visuddhi, purification of view by analysis of bodily and mental states. Kankha-vitharana-visuddhi is the next stage where doubts about causes and conditions of rising and vanishing of psycho-physical states are cleared to purify the mind. The next stage of purification is to decide the right path to proceed when the meditator tends to be deceived into thinking that he is perfect because certain psychic powers have developed during the development of the mind. The stage that follows is the patipada-nana-dassana-visuddhi or purification obtained by development of nine kinds of insights

These nine kinds of insights are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Udaya-nana: | The insight that perceives the rising of material and mental states every instant. |
| Vaya-nana: | The insight which sees passing away of all material and mental states immediately after they arise. |
| Bhanga-nana: | The insight which sees more clearly the dissolution of material states. |
| Bhaya-nana: | The insight that causes fear and danger to be seen in the momentary dissolution of material and mental states. |

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- Adinava-nana:** The insight that shows the vanity, uselessness and unsatisfactory nature of continuity of material and mental states.
- Nibbida-nana:** The insight that makes one tired and disgusted of the material and mental existence.
- Muncitukamyata-nana:** The insight that develops perception and will to get rid of the unsatisfactory material and mental states.
- Patisankhanupassana-nana:** The insight that gives rise to clear perception of impermanence, unsatisfactory nature and egolessness of all conditioned things.
- Sankharupekkha-nana:** The insight that gives equanimity, equipoise or balanced view of conditioned things having perceived their exact nature.

The next stage of purification after developing the nine kinds of insights is the sight of Nibbana (gotrabhu-nana) followed by the full purification of mind or attaining to perfection of wisdom by gradual elimination of mental defilements(nana-dassana visuddhi). This stage has four steps, stream-entry(sotapatti), once-returner (sakadagami), non-returner (anagami) and perfection (arahantship).

The above described thirty seven factors that develop during the first six stages of development or purifications of the mind, as they deal with conditioned things or worldly things are still mundane consciousness or lokiya citta. During these stages all these factors do not develop together in the consciousness at the same time.

It is in the last stage, that the mind is able to see both sides namely the conditioned states (worldly existence) and the unconditioned state (Nibbana). Thus in this stage for the first time when the thought

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stream surpasses the worldly states and the impulsive consciousness fixes itself on the Nibbana, the consciousness reaches the supra-mundane level. Then onwards the consciousness treads the four steps gradually eradicating all mental defilements. The thirty seven constituents or mental factors that arise in this stage are called supra-mundane consciousness and they all arise collectively in this stage.

In summary the thirty four mental factors that constitute factors for realization of the truth are mainly made from fourteen factors. Effort that is described in nine stages, mindfulness four times, concentration four times, wisdom five times and confidence twice. The other factors like sankappa or aspirations or ideas, tranquillity, joy or rapture, equanimity, will, consciousness or citta and the three abstentions or virati (wrong speech, action and livelihood) occur once in this classification. During the first six of the seven stages of purification leading to enlightenment the consciousness is dealing with the objects that are conditioned or worldly. Therefore the mental factors that are associated from the above thirty seven, which do not arise collectively at the same time, are worldly or lokiya. It is in the seventh stage when the unconditioned state is perceived by the mind that the same mental factors that arise collectively at the same time are supra-mundane or lokuttara.

CHAPTER TWELVE

NIBBANA

Nibbana is a Pali word for which the Sanskrit equivalent is Nirvana. Both these words mean cool, peace, calm, serenity, bliss, supreme happiness, emancipation, passionless and the Summum Bonum. The explanation of Nibbana the ultimate goal of Buddhism according to the Theravada literature is the subject of this essay. It should be mentioned that the term Nibbana and its equivalents Nibbuti and Vimutti are used in various suttas in the Theravada literature, to express several experiences of mind and not only the ultimate realization or perfection.

According to one classification, we find six kinds of experiences under the term Nibbana, Nibbuti or Vimutti. These are, Miccaditthi-nibbana, Sammuti-nibbana, Tadanga-nibbana, Vikkhambana-nibbana, Samuccheda-nibbana, Patippassaddhi-nibbana and Nissarana-nibbana or Nibbana-dhatu.

The first, Micchaditthi Nibbana means wrong view. This wrong view is the materialistic view, in which religious values and practices are ignored and only material values such as wealth, bodily comfort and sensual enjoyments are considered as the important values. According to this view real happiness is in enjoyment of senses. This view is described in the Brahmajala Sutta of Dighanikaya as follows: Whenever the soul (being), in full enjoyment and possession of the five pleasures of senses, indulges all its functions, then the being has attained, in this visible world, to the highest Nibbana. (*Dialogues of the Buddha I p.49*).

Next we come to Sammuti Nibbana. In common parlance, release or relief from worries or troubles is called ease or happiness. When we read the life of the prince Siddharta, we come across an account of an important incident in his life which illustrates this kind of Nibbana.

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Once on seeing the prince returning from the royal park, a Sakyan maiden called Kisa Gotami, uttered the following verse from her balcony:

"Nibbuta nuna sa mata
Nibbuta nuna so pita
Nibbuta nuna sa nari
Yassayam idiso pati"

(Happy and cool indeed is the mother, happy and cool indeed is the father, who has this or a similar one for her or his son. Happy and cool is the wife who has this or a similar one for her husband.)

In this utterance she used the word "Nibbuta" to mean 'happy and cool or fortunate'. This sort of Nibbana or cool state of one's life is called Sammuti Nibbana, the happiness according to convention. In this incident we see that the Sakyan girl meant a peaceful and happy life by the term Nibbuta (happy and calm).

Inspired by her words, the prince began to ponder over how one would become perfectly happy and calm. It is this thought that lead to the conclusion, "So long as there remain the fires of passions unquenched and uncooled in one's heart, one could not be counted as really happy and perfectly cool. So I must find out with no delay a way to extinguish these fires."

Consider the inhabitants of a country suffering from an epidemic of a dangerous disease. They would live in fear and anxiety and dismay. But if and when the epidemic is over what would be their relief and joy and consolation. If we examine, their minds are free of fear, worry and dismay. On the positive side their minds are full of joy, consolation, happiness. Therefore we cannot say that this liberation is a negative thing, but a positive state that could be described as negative of suffering states. It is a real experience and cannot be denied as an expression only. This is Sammuti Nibbana.

The next higher stage of Nibbana is Tadanga-nibbana. When we render a service of some kind to help another in trouble and give him

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relief from such, unselfishly, we feel our minds are full of positive thoughts such as pity, compassion and unselfishness. In this state there is no room for selfishness, anger and hate to arise in the mind. Similarly when we pay respect to a person who is saintly, a parent or teacher, our mind develops thoughts full of faith, love and modesty and there is no chance for self-conceit, and the like to arise. In this state of mind we become happy, serene and unwholesome. This state of mind free from unwholesome thoughts and is happy and serene is called Tadanga-nibbana. This state of mind is not a negative thing or nothingness.

A still higher kind of Nibbana is called Vikkhambhana-nibbana. This kind of nibbana is experienced by a person who develops his mind by meditation. By concentration on one of the forty objects or kasina, he manages to control the mind from constant scattering by selfishness, conceit, fear and many other lower mental states. Then he becomes strong enough to constantly fix his mind on the object and isolate it from other objects. There are eight stages of concentration of mind on one object where it becomes deeper and deeper than its preceding ones. These states are called jhanas in Pali. In these states, the meditator feels blissful and suffused with a sense of ease and pure lucidity of mind. Weaknesses such as sensuality, ill will, sloth and stupor, worry and restlessness and perplexity subside. The mind feels healthy, happy, strong, calm, serene and blissful. The blissful experiences in these jhana states is called vikkhambhana-nibbana..

But this kind of nibbana is also not permanent, and if the meditator turns his mind towards an external object he falls from this bliss. It is because he knows that this bliss is not the goal that one turns towards vipassana or insight meditation. By analysis of body and mind in vipassana meditation he realizes the impermanence, unsatisfactory nature and egolessness of the body-mind states called "I" and by inference of other beings. As he progresses in the vipassana meditation he comes to the first stage of realization when he eradicates wrong views(micchaditthi) and uncertainty(vicikiccha) and perceives the real Nibbana for the first time. As he progresses on the path he attenuates craving and related mental defilements to reach the second stage. Here also he glimpses the real

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nibbana dathu. He reaches the third stage and further weakens the remaining mental defilements. The goal is the fourth stage where all mental defilements are completely eradicated.

Before he entered the stream and its four stages his mind was constantly bombarded by and fatigued by dormant and surging mental defilements or passions. When he has eradicated the passions and removed the fatigue of the mind caused by the dormant and surging passions he experiences the bliss of Samuccheda-nibbana. During the four stages he attenuates passions and eradicates passions gradually. In each stage immediately after such freeing he perceives Nibbana for two or three mind units. These mind units when the peace from mental passions pervade the mind are called Patippassaddhi-nibbana.

In this mental states of bliss unwholesome thoughts that fatigue the mind are eradicated. The peace that is obtained by such eradication cannot be described as nothingness. Such a person has perceived the Nibbana-dhatu with his mind's eye, and fixing on the state of Nibbana experiences the bliss that arises thereby with his mind. This Nibbana-dhatu on which such a person has fixed his mind's eye and experiences the bliss is called Sa-upadisesa-nibbana.

When an arahant passes away, the nature to which he turns is called Anupadisesa-nibbana. This is not annihilation or nothingness. But it is a state that is beyond the worldly existence and therefore words that are only meant to describe worldly phenomena cannot be used to describe it. The only way it can be explained is by using negative terms to describe that the phenomena of impermanence, unsatisfactory state, decay and death are not present in this state. The only by experience that the true nature of this state can be discerned.

Now the question arises, how could one know the existence of Nibbana?

In the Theravada teachings, the existence of Nibbana may be discerned in three ways: agama-siddhi, anumyya-siddhi and paccakkha-siddhi. Agama-siddhi means the knowledge of Nibbana through the study

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of scriptures. Nibbana is described in many instances in many parts of the Three-pitaka. For example in the Itivuttaka, it is explained thus: "There exists, O Brethren, an unborn, an unbecome, an unmade, an uncompounded. O Brethren, if there were not this unborn, this unbecome, this unmade, this uncompounded, no hope at all could be had by this born, by this become, by this made, by this compounded".

Again the following story in the Three-pitaka, explains Nibbana. One day a king inquired from an arahant nun, as to what happens to an arahant, a perfect saint after death.

The arahant nun explained, "Permit me to ask you in return a question, O king. Please reply as you think. Have you among your men, an accountant, a master of your treasury or any officer skilled in numbers, who might be able to count the number of grains of sand of the river Ganges, and who might be able to tell you a number as to the number of grains of sands?"

"That have I not, Venerable lady," said the king.

"Have you any store-keeper, an accountant or any other officer able to measure the water of the great ocean and say how many drops of water it contains?"

"That have I not"

"Why not, O king?"

"It is because the great ocean so deep, is unmeasurable, unfathomable."

"Even so, O king is the being who has attained to Nibbana..., The state of such an one is deep, immeasurable and unfathomable," said the nun.

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When the king, on meeting the Buddha, told him what the nun said, the Buddha said, "O king, if you had come to me first and asked the same question, I would have given you the same answer. The nun in her wisdom explained in the same manner I would have".

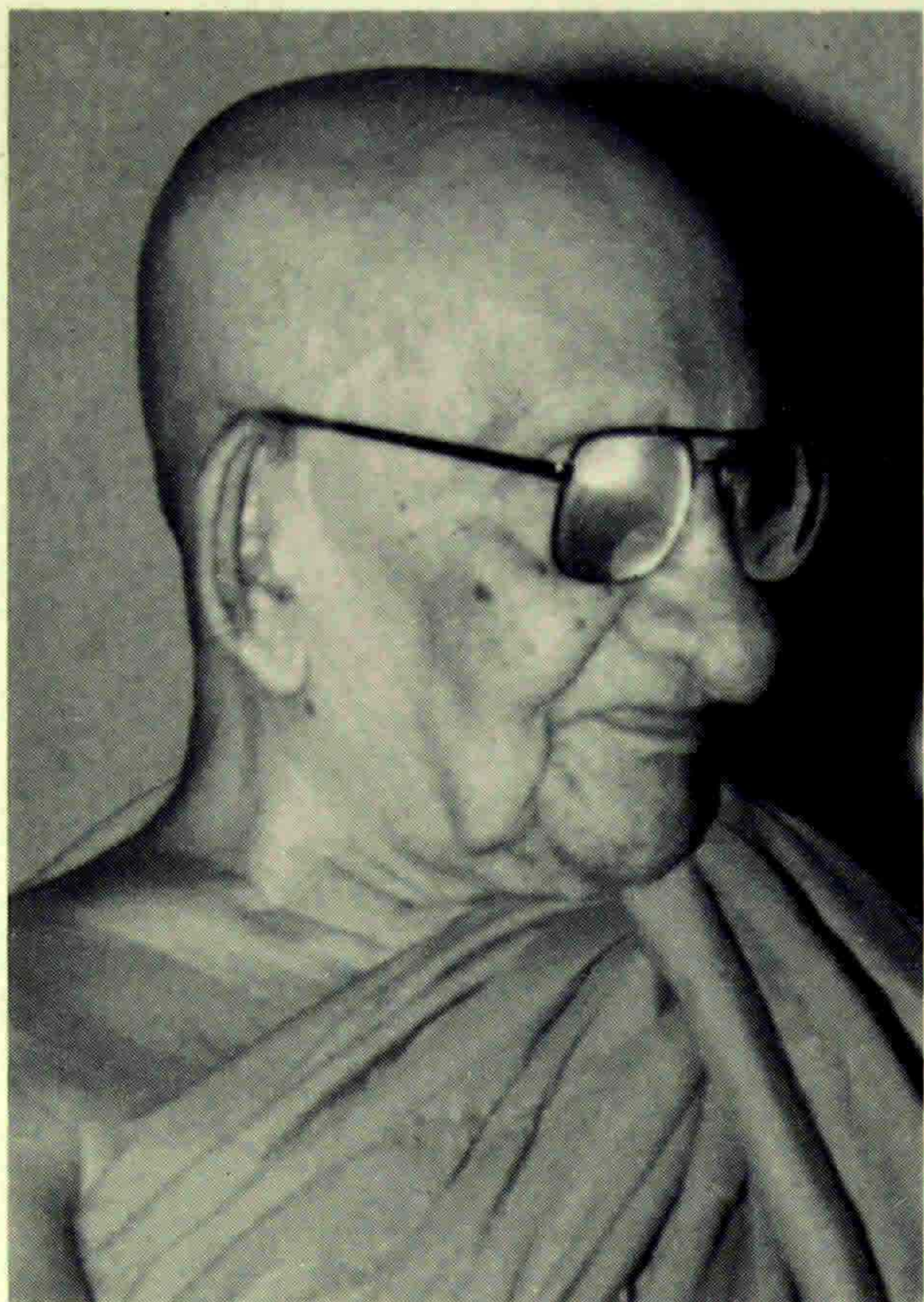
So when one reads the description of Nibbana given in the texts, it is clear that the person who had attained to Nibbana, is not annihilated. His nature or state after death, the Anupadisesa-Nibbana is beyond words and cannot be described by positive terms. As explained before the words are limited to the conditioned and composed things of the worldly existence. Only phenomenal states, of which the world is composed, can be explained using the words.

Thus the knowledge of Nibbana, gathered through the study of scriptures is called agama-siddhi.

Anumeyya-siddhi is the inferential knowledge. Every thing has its opposite. Sickness has health; heat has cold; darkness has light; and likewise samsara the round of rebirths the phenomenal existence must have its opposite. This state is the reality, the Nibbana. If there is a state of being born, becoming, made, and decaying there must be state where there is no birth, becoming, decay and death. This is the inferential knowledge of Nibbana.

A person by these two ways of gathering knowledge about Nibbana (scriptural and inferential) comes to understand that there is actually a perfect state, a reality, a peaceful state for the suffering mortals. He then follows the path leading to this state, expounded by the Buddha after discovering it. In progress in this path he attains to realization of the four great truths. At the moment of the realization of the truths, he perceives Nibbana with his mind's eye, and experiences it. This experience of Nibbana is called paccakkha-siddhi.

Now it should be clear that Nibbana as expounded by the Buddha as the goal of the path-goer, is not nothingness but a state to be realized and experienced, an actuality, the only Reality.



The most Ven. Aggamahapandita Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Thero, at ninety nine years is the oldest Buddhist Prelate in Sri Lanka. Ordained at the age of fourteen, he very soon became a recognized teacher and expositor of the Buddhist doctrine in Theravada as well as Mahayana schools. He is well known among the scholarly community in the world for his mastery of the doctrine as well as knowledge in Pali, Sanskrit and several other languages. He is much sought after by them in unravelling controversial and difficult points in the doctrine. He has written a large number of books on Buddhism, well used for reference.

Early in his life as a Bhikku, the Mahanayke Thero taught Buddhism, Pali and Sanskrit in a leading Buddhist school in Colombo. The seminary or Bhikku training school

established by him later, over half a century ago in his native town in Sri Lanka is flourishing as a shining example of his capabilities. He served as the Chairman of the Department of Buddhist philosophy and as the Dean of the faculty of Oriental Studies and finally as the Vice Chancellor of the Vidyodaya University of Sri Lanka. He retired from this position in 1965 and has spent his time mainly in writing, travelling all over the world, lecturing and guiding scholars in Buddhism.

He is also a well known teacher of Buddhist meditation techniques both Samatha (Tranquility Meditation) and Vipassana (Insight Meditation). The Mahanayake Thero is a renowned practitioner of meditation and does not neglect the practice even for a day. It is an example for others to see him at his age, busy with meditation, writing, discussing and explaining the Dhamma with scholars who visit him daily from all over the world, throughout the day.

The crowning points of his life as a Buddhist prelate were when he was appointed the Supreme Head of the Amarapura sect, Advisor and translator of the Three Pitaka Translation Committee of the Government of Sri Lanka and when he led a delegation of monks representing Sri Lanka to participate in the celebrated Sixth Buddhist Council (Sangayana) held in Burma in 1953 and was appointed the Chairman of the Council for some of its sessions.

The present volume of essays originated as lectures and were taped and later edited by the author and covers a wide range from special qualities of the Buddha to Abhidhamma (Buddhist Psychology).